Culture & Rhetoric

Studies in Rhetoric and Culture

Edited by **Ivo Strecker,** Johannes Gutenburg University Mainz and Addis Ababa University, **Stephen Tyler,** Rice University, and **Robert Hariman,** Northwestern University

Our minds are filled with images and ideas, but these remain unstable and incomplete as long as we do not manage to persuade both ourselves and others of their meanings. It is this inward and outward rhetoric which allows us to give some kind of shape and structure to our understanding of the world and which becomes central to the formation of individual and collective consciousness. This series is dedicated to the study of the interaction of rhetoric and culture and focuses on the concrete practices of discourse in which and through which the diverse and often also fantastic patterns of culture—including our own—are created, maintained, and contested.

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Culture & Rhetoric

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Edited by
Ivo Strecker and Stephen Tyler

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Preface

This book is the result of years of work done by scholars involved in the International Rhetoric Culture Project (see *www.rhetoricculture.org*), and in order to show the scope of cooperation and the wide range of activities that preceded the publication of results, we outline here the history of the project in some detail.

According to our private myth, it all began one winter day of 1981 in the Haddon Library at Cambridge University. Some rare rays of the sun were playing on the books on the shelves and made Ivo forget what he had come for. Then, suddenly, the title of Stephen's green book caught his eyes: *The Said and the Unsaid* (1978). What a fitting title, he thought, for it evoked all the problems that he was then encountering in his study of symbolism, later to be published as *The Social Practice of Symbolization* (1988). There and then he began to read and found that in his preface Stephen had outlined a vision of research that was very much in tune with his own, a "rhetorical and hermeneutical vision of language that returns language to its proper context of everyday uses and understandings" (Tyler 1978: XII).

Here is not the place to recall the details of how we met and began to discuss our mutual interest in a rhetorical theory of culture. It must suffice to say that we eventually arranged a workshop on "Rhetoric Culture Theory" at the 1998 Biennial Conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) in Frankfurt/Main.

Afterward we found it premature to publish any results and thought it better to involve more of the leading scholars working on the intersection of rhetoric, anthropology, philosophy, literary studies, and the like. Perhaps nothing would have come of our plans if the German Research Society (DFG) had not agreed to finance Christian Meyer and a small team of junior students of Mainz University to assist with the library research that still needed to be done in order to draft an application for funding further conferences. In addition, several senior students and staff joined our team, notably Anna-Maria Brand-

stetter and Felix Girke of Mainz, and Anke Reichenbach of Leipzig University. This was an exciting time when we had constant contact with each other, when our email correspondence was growing daily, and when one distinguished scholar after another joined our project.

In March 2001 we sent out an application to the Volkswagen Foundation for support of a conference on "General Rhetoric Culture Theory" and one on "Rhetoric and Linguistics." A few months later we were told that funds had been granted to hold the two conferences as requested, scheduled for February and July 2002 respectively, and to be held at the Institute of Anthropology and African Studies at Mainz University.

After the conferences we entrusted the publication of results to Berghahn Books, which agreed to start a new series entitled *Studies in Rhetoric and Culture;* and together with Marion Berghahn—who herself holds a Ph.D. in social anthropology—and her staff, we drafted a first introduction to the series.

But although we had announced that we would now begin to publish, we soon began to doubt whether this was wise, for we still needed further contributions to general theory and had nothing or little on special subjects such as economics, politics, social relations, and religion. Wouldn't it be better to use our energies first to conduct further conferences that would address these themes and would allow us once and for all to lay the foundation for the series that Marion had so generously offered to publish?

So, from Spring 2003 onward for a whole year we worked on yet another application, supported in Mainz by Anne, Christian, and Felix as well as colleagues from other universities: Donald Brenneis (Santa Cruz), Ralph Cintron (Chicago), Stephen Gudeman (Minneapolis), and Jean Lydall (Addis Ababa). Others occasionally gave us advice, especially Jon Abbink (Amsterdam), Vincenzo Cannada Bartoli (Rome), and Susanne Schröter (Frankfurt/M). The Volkswagen Foundation took quite a while to decide, but eventually funds were granted for two further conferences, one on "Rhetoric in Social Relations and Religion" (February 2005) and one on "Rhetoric in Politics and Economics" (July 2005), and it was at this point that the "Rhetoric Culture Project" really came into its own.

It would be tempting to tell more about the history of the project here and relate, for example, how we discovered Jean Nienkamp's new book *Internal Rhetorics* and celebrated it with a workshop held in her honor at Mainz, July 2003; or how Philippe-Joseph Salazar invited members of the Rhetoric Culture Group to explain their project and reveal their ambitions at his conference "About an African Athens" in June 2004 at Cape Town University; or how we began to realize the relevance of chiasmus for Rhetoric Culture theory, discovered Boris Wiseman and Anthony Paul, and subsequently asked them to attend one of our conferences; but here there is room for only one more episode:

Sometime after we had completed the "Rhetoric Culture Conferences," Gerard Hauser invited several of us to the "12th Biennial Conference of the Rhetoric Society of America" scheduled for 26–29 May 2006 in Memphis. He wrote that he and Ralph Cintron had discussed the need to continue the dialogue between anthropology and rhetoric, and that they had floated a proposal to David Zarefsky, President-Elect of the Rhetoric Society of America, to include a session devoted to the work of anthropologists that bore on rhetoric and would highlight the presence of anthropologists, draw a good audience, and promote debate.

Mentioned in the program as one of the highlights and entitled "Rhetoric Culture: A Dialogue Between Anthropology and Rhetoric," the panel was included in the conference and drew indeed a good audience and promoted a lot of fruitful talk. Most importantly, the conference brought out once again how much rhetoric can gain from anthropology and vice versa. In his introduction to the program, Zarefsky had written that the conference chose "Sizing up Rhetoric" as its central theme because it was time "to take stock of rhetoric's current position in the academy and in our culture." Scholars should also reflect, he continued, "on what rhetoric's 'size' is and ought to be—how large should be the scope and range of projects we undertake," and finally he encouraged everyone to "think bigger" about their research and teaching aspirations.

At the first plenary session, Steven Mailloux (Irvine) enlarged on this in a talk entitled "One Size Doesn't Fit All: The Contingent Universality of Rhetoric." He stressed the point that the transdisciplinary perspective of rhetoric both explains and challenges traditional disciplinary boundaries (thanks to Steve for sending us the manuscript!). This was, of course, very much in accord with the Rhetoric Culture project, which by definition is based on a wide concept of rhetoric and makes the case that the relationship between anthropology and rhetoric is one of mutual interdependence.

After the conference, we decided to ask a scholar of the Rhetorical Society of America to join us as third editor of the Berghahn Books series *Studies in Rhetoric and Culture*. The choice was not difficult, for Robert Hariman had been helping us already a great deal with contacts, conversation, and editorial advice. So we asked Bob, who without any ado accepted the invitation.

The conferences held at the Johannes Gutenberg-University of Mainz have been recorded on video, and the resulting films are available from Berghahn Books and Documentary Educational Resources in a series entitled *Conference in Film*, which "captures," as our flyer says, "the rhetorical element of scholarly discourse and enables viewers to witness the drama—or shall we say comedy—of academic culture."

Ivo Strecker (South Omo Research Center, Jinka, Ethiopia)
Stephen Tyler (Rice University, Houston, USA)

Acknowledgments

Our thanks go first and foremost to the Volkswagen Foundation for sponsoring the four Rhetoric Culture conferences that have resulted not only in the present book but also a number of other volumes of the new Berghahn Books series *Studies in Rhetoric and Culture*.

We would like to stress how indebted we are to Hiltgund Jehle for encouraging us to apply for funding, and advising us how to improve our proposal, for the first two Rhetoric Culture conferences. Later, Antje Gunsenheimer was similarly helpful in the preparation of the next two conferences, and guided us to success.

A thousand thanks to both of you!

We are grateful to the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz for hosting and supporting the conferences, both logistically and materially. The staff and students of the Institute of Anthropology and African Studies deserve special thanks for helping in countless practical matters, and for preparing the exhibits and "interludes" (music and other performances) that accompanied the conferences. In particular we would like to mention Helena Hübner, Stephanie Wallen, and Rita Bauer for carrying much of the administrative burden, and doing such excellent secretarial work. Many thanks go also to Jörg Hoffmann, Elke Rössler, and Andreas Wetter who developed our Internet site (*www.rhetoricculture.org*) and helped design the posters and folders for the conferences, as well as to Axel Brandstetter who prepared the manuscript of the present book for publication.

Further institutional support came from the German Research Society (DFG). We are thankful for the "seed money" it provided, which—in 2001—allowed us to employ Christian Meyer and a group of student assistants to help complete the library research needed to give the Rhetoric Culture project a solid footing.

Over the years, many colleagues and friends encouraged us intellectually and emotionally as we embarked on the Rhetoric Culture venture. Much is lost in the mist of the past, but one early event still stands out clearly. In May 1995, Karl-Heinz Kohl had invited an international group of anthropologists and philosophers to fathom the question of "Anthropology and the Question of the Other." It was there, as we debated the epistemological insecurities of anthropological theory with Tullio Maranhao, Stanley Tambiah, Debborah Battaglia, Vincent Crapanzano, Barbara and Dennis Tedlock, Unni Wikan, Frederik Barth, Volker Gottowick and others, that we first conceived the idea of a rhetorical theory of culture, which we explored more fully at the 1998 Biennial Conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) in Frankfurt/Main. Karl-Heinz, who has always wished us well and believed in the worthiness of our project, hosted both of these conferences.

The support we received from Bernhard Streck was different but equally strong. He, with his staff and students at Leipzig University, contributed significantly during the early stages when we tried to conceptualize and formulate the Rhetoric Culture project. We still recall how, without hesitation, Anke Reichenbach hopped on the train one night to travel from Leipzig to Mainz so as to help and cheer up the Rhetoric Culture group during a moment of severe crisis.

Although we have already mentioned them in the preface, here we want to emphasize how much we owe to Christian Meyer, Anna-Maria Brandstetter, and Felix Girke. Without their good humor, creative imagination and dedication the Rhetoric Culture conferences and the present book would never have materialized.

After the first two conferences, the project consolidated and we received support from a widening circle of scholars who helped identify central topics for research, suggested to whom else invitations might be tendered, provided titles for our bibliography, and assisted in writing proposals for further Rhetoric Culture conferences. For the latter, we are especially indebted to Stephen Gudeman and Ralph Cintron. They contributed enormously to getting the Rhetoric Culture project rolling by way of email, phone, and face-to-face conversations with many others, in particular Jon Abbink, J. F. Bailey, Vincenzo Cannada-Bartoli, Ellen Basso, Donald Brenneis, Francois Douay, James and Renate Fernandez, James Fox, Gerard and Jean Hauser, Pierre Maranda, David MacDougall, Brigitte Nerlich, Jean Nienkamp, Todd Oakley, and Susanne Schröter.

Our thanks also go to another set of colleagues—among them Thomas Bierschenk, Penelope Brown, Stephan Feuchtwang, Dilip Gaonkar, Stephen Levinson, Deirdre McCloskey, Susan du Mesnil, Michael Oppitz, Nikolaus Schareika, and Dan Sperber—who often made critical comments and teased

us into questioning and rethinking some of the basic assumptions and aspirations underlying the Rhetoric Culture project.

Although we tried to be international, most contributors to the Rhetoric Culture conferences came from Europe, North America, and Australia. Luckily, we had a strong contingent of scholars from Africa who widened and enlivened our discussions. We thank you warmly: Felix Ameka, Shifferaw Bekele, Andreas Eshéte, Mabiala Mantuba-Ngoma, Alula Pankhurst, Philippe-Joseph Salazar, Kwesi Yankah, and Baye Yimam.

After we held the (at times tumultuous) Rhetoric Culture conferences, we asked some of the contributors to sum up their views of what actually had happened. As our homepage (*www.rhetoricculture.org*) shows, Michael Carrithers, Ralph Cintron, Stephen Gudeman, and Keith Hart have done a wonderful job here. Their thoughtful summaries and comments deserve special thanks because they helped to establish the validity of the Rhetoric Culture project, and to uphold confidence during the long time that elapsed between the conferences and the publication of results.

When the time came to look for a publisher we were very fortunate to find that Berghahn Books was ready to establish a new series entitled *Studies in Rhetoric and Culture,* where the results of the Rhetoric Culture conferences could be published. Marion Berghahn and her daughter Vivian, both of whom hold degrees in anthropology, have a good understanding of the promises and pitfalls of our project and have carefully steered the present book (and those that follow) to completion. We would like to express our gratitude to them, as well as to the anonymous readers and Robert Hariman whose critical comments helped to restructure and improve the book.

Finally, we embrace and kiss our wives—Martha and Jean—and thank them for their (often teasing and ironic) support. In countless conversations they have contributed their professional knowledge of psychology, literature, anthropology, and linguistics to our emerging thoughts, and have encouraged us to call for a marriage between rhetoric and anthropology, and to explore the relationship between rhetoric and culture.

Introduction

Ivo Strecker & Stephen Tyler

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

The history of cultural anthropology has been sketched as a set of experiments involving liaisons between two disciplines, such as anthropology and religion, anthropology and biology, anthropology and linguistics, anthropology and history (Kuper 1999). In the present book—as well as in forthcoming volumes of the Berghahn Books series *Studies in Rhetoric and Culture*—we add to this experiment by bringing rhetoric and anthropology closer to each other than they have ever been before.

Many factors contribute to the shaping of human action, but rhetoric, we argue, is the decisive factor in the emergence of cultural diversity past and present. Inward and outward persuasion is the mother of invention, and it is our rhetorical genius that creates the "customs" and "lifestyles" of culture; the "folkways" and "mores" (William Sumner 1906), the "spirit" or "paideuma" (Leo Frobenius 1921); the "patterns" and "configurations" (Ruth Benedict 1934); the "ethos" and "eidos" (Gregory Bateson 1936, 1958); the "habitus" (Pierre Bourdieu 1977). Even the "codes," "systems," and "structures" analyzed by semiotics may be explained in these terms, for, as Clifford Geertz has observed, they are nothing but "webs of significance" we ourselves have spun (1973: 5). Just as there is no "zero degree rhetoric" in any utterance (George Kennedy 1998), there is no "zero degree rhetoric" in any of the patterns of culture.

Several scholars have criticized the notion of "culture" as inviting a particular form of reification and implying a Procrustean vision of human existence. For this reason, they even began to write against culture or urged abandonment of the concept altogether (Arjun Appadurai 1986, Lila Abu-Lugod 1991, Michel-Rolph Trouillot 2002). Yet, it seems to us that a more productive way would be to rethink the concept and locate culture in the domain where it ultimately belongs—that is, rhetoric.

Classical traditions of rhetoric tell us that invention is not the discovery of the new but rather the "coming-in" (*in-venere)* of what was already known. Creativity is enabled by tradition not as the burden of the past but as the means of the present and future. Contributors to *Culture and Rhetoric* acknowledge this constant flow and the emergence and disappearance of theories and their social and cultural contexts, and many of them discuss and make full use of classical theories of rhetoric, which since antiquity have emphasized the nexus of rhetoric and culture (see especially the chapters by Stephen Tyler and Ivo Strecker, Christian Meyer, Peter Oesterreich, Daniel Ross, Vicenzo Cannada Bartoli, Alan Rumsey, Philippe Salazar, and James Fernandez). Others have drawn on topical works of Western literature (Anthony Paul on William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and Paul Friedrich on Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*), and on early and contemporary scholars in anthropology (see especially the good use Boris Wiseman has made of Claude Lévi-Strauss). In addition, most contributors have—explicitly or implicitly—made full use of recent and not so recent developments in anthropological linguistics, discourse analysis, and the ethnography of speaking.[1]

The collocation *Rhetoric Culture*—used by the Rhetoric Culture project (see preface and chapter 1) and all the conferences it has held—also echoes *Writing Culture* (James Clifford and George Marcus eds. 1986), which rightly asked whether all ethnographies are not rhetorical performances determined by the need to tell an effective story. However, while rhetoric is the instrument with which we *describe,* it is also the means by which we *create* culture. Here we find a curious lacuna in most of the contributions to *Writing Culture.* No one dwells on the rhetoricality of culture. Yes, there are inklings of the role of rhetoric in social life, as when James Clifford approvingly quotes Victor Turner as saying that social processes are saturated "with a rhetoric, a mode of emplotment, and a meaning" (Clifford and Marcus 1986: 98). But the reference to Turner is then not used to reflect on the interaction of rhetoric and culture. Instead it is used to bolster the argument that ethnography itself is "a performance emplotted by powerful stories. Embodied in written reports, these stories simultaneously describe real cultural events and make additional, moral, ideological, and even cosmological statements. Ethnographic writing is allegorical at the level both of its content (what it says about cultures and their histories) and of its form (what is implied by its mode of textualization)" (Clifford and Marcus 1986: 98).

We share this rhetorical view of ethnography but add to it that "real cultural events" are not as real as they may seem, and that they must not be mistaken as being in any way more real than their representations. It is at this junction where Rhetoric Culture studies part from *Writing Culture* and embark on a course that explores the creative role of rhetoric in the emergence of

culture. Here we align ourselves with Dennis Tedlock and Bruce Mannheim, who in their introduction to *The Dialogic Emergence of Culture* (1995) have claimed that "cultures are continuously produced, reproduced, and revised in dialogues among their members" (1995: 2) and who argue that "Once culture is seen as arising from a dialogical ground, then ethnography itself is revealed as an emergent cultural (or intercultural) phenomenon, produced, reproduced, and revised in dialogues between field-workers and natives. The process of its production is of the same general kind as the process by which ethnic others produce the cultures that are the objects of ethnographic study" (1995: 2).

Tedlock and Mannheim also emphasize the role of "tacit collusion" in discourse. "All social events," they write, "require the tacit collusion of the participants, who implicitly agree that they are interpreting the events within the same general framework. This interactional collusion is not socially neutral; rather, it involves a carefully crafted set of social repositionings in which dominance hierarchies emerge with the collusion (though not necessarily the consent) of the dominated" (1995: 13). Yet, although they are fully aware of the role of "collusion" in culture, none of the contributors to *The Dialogic Emergence of Culture* takes recourse to rhetoric, the discipline that since antiquity has been concerned with the ubiquity of inward and outward persuasion, and with the hidden agendas of interlocutors.

■ ■ ■

Because of the early and probing stage of our project, we invited scholars from different disciplines (anthropology, rhetoric, literature, linguistics, philosophy) to a first conference entitled "Rhetoric Culture Theory," asking them to contribute whatever they thought appropriate. This resulted in a set of quite heterogeneous papers—some solicited at later stages—that are now distributed over three volumes of the *Studies in Rhetoric and Culture* series, each with its own focus (or better, foci). The volume edited by Michael Carrithers presents essays that show how the *vicissitudes of life* motivate rhetoric and are a source of cultural creativity; the volume edited by Christian Meyer and Felix Girke investigates *resonance* phenomena and the *rhetorical emergence of culture;* while the present volume centers on *chiasm* and *figuration.*

Coming, as it does, from a conference on general theory, the book is naturally more about broad theoretical issues than about analyzing ethnographic cases in detail. Several chapters—for instance those by Gross, Friedrich, Herzfeld, Hariman, Paul, Rumsey, and Salazar have a strong empirical ingredient, but readers who look for more elaborate examples of what a rhetorical theory of culture can contribute to ethnographic practice will have to wait for further volumes in the *Studies in Rhetoric and Culture* series. These will be about rhetoric in social relations, in economic life, in political style, religion, and the

like, and they will focus, as the publisher's flyer says, "on concrete practices of discourse in which and through which cultures are performed, contested, and reproduced."

The present volume divides into two parts, each centering on one of two themes, which right from the beginning have inspired and given momentum to the Rhetoric Culture project.

Chiasm (Part I) played already a central role in our first workshop at the 5th Biennial Conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (1998) when we invited scholars "to help overcome the state of limbo in which cognitive, symbolic, dialogic, and all sorts of discursive anthropologies had left us," and "to provide a new—or rather very old—direction and sense of relevance to the study of culture by retrieving, exploring and making full use of the ancient insight that just as rhetoric is founded in culture, culture is founded in rhetoric."

Later, during the subsequent conferences, the topic widened and we began to focus both on the chiastic relationship between rhetoric and culture (see especially the chapters by Stephen Tyler and Ivo Strecker, Christian Meyer, Vincenzo Cannada Bartoli) as well as other chiastic phenomena in thought and culture (see the chapters by Boris Wiseman and Anthony Paul).

Figuration (Part II) provides, as the title of Philippe-Joseph Salazar's essay puts it, a common ground for rhetoric and anthropology. For a long time already, rhetoricians as well as anthropologists have been interested in figuration (metaphor, allegory, the theory of tropes), and these topics figured large in the works of James G. Frazer (1890, 1927), Franz Boas (1911, 1940), and Paul Radin (1945, 1950). But only the "metaphoric turn" in the middle of the twentieth century gave a crucial impulse that brought research on figuration in thought and culture to the forefront of anthropology.[2]

The first publication in anthropology to carry both "metaphor" and "rhetoric" in its title was *The Social Use of Metaphor: Essays in the Anthropology of Rhetoric* (1977) edited by David Sapir and Christopher Crocker. This book was dedicated to Kenneth Burke, and showed, both theoretically and empirically, how metaphors are not only "good to think with," "good to speak with," or "good to write with" but are especially "good to live by," as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson were to put it a few years later (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

Giambattisto Vico demonstrated already long ago (see Christian Meyer in this volume) that *analogy* is perhaps the most evident form in which rhetoric manifests itself in culture. Ethnographies of magic, ritual, religion, art, and practically all other domains of culture typically abound with the rhetorical use of analogy.

For this reason Tim Ingold has called analogy the "drive of culture." "The essence of culture," he writes,

> lies in a uniquely human capacity to recognize and exploit likeness, or, in other words, to operate analogically. To construct an analogy (or metaphor) is to establish a relation between phenomena drawn from different domains of experience, in terms of a perceived similarity. Any real-world object, as it is caught up in the nexus of analogical relations, can become a symbol. We can discover the meanings of symbols by attending to the multiple social contexts in which they are used: what each symbol does is to bring together these contexts into a single focus, the greater the symbolic resonance of the object by which it is represented. In the course of social life, new analogic linkages are forever being forged against the background of existing convention, only to become conventional in their turn: thus over time the meanings of symbols change. The analogic drive, in short, is the very motor of the cultural process. (Ingold 1994: 334)

To this we may add that the study of tropes also allows us to see the wide margin of indeterminacy and interpretative leeway in communication, because people do not and cannot always know how to say properly what they think. By the same token, they do not and cannot always fully know what others mean by what they say. These seeming shortcomings in natural communication can in turn be—and in fact often are—exploited rhetorically. Figuration is a prime example of this, because when people create figures they create semantic collocations that resist univocal interpretation and therefore have an element of the "fantastic."

Like the mythical trickster, rhetoric allows us to turn fact into fiction and fiction into fact. It tempts us to persuade ourselves—and others—to see and feel what we wish, and it leads us to limitless flights of fancy. By means of rhetoric we create phantasms, by means of rhetoric we act like demons, and by means of rhetoric we conjure up those ideas, values, moral rules, and laws that constitute the basis of culture.

And then again, it is the use of tropes that leads us to intimations of transcendence (see the chapter by Paul Friedrich) and guides our understanding of ephemeral forms of experience.

■ ■ ■

Part I, The Chiasm of Rhetoric and Culture, opens with "The Rhetoric Culture Project," a short essay in which Stephen Tyler and Ivo Strecker reflect on the chiastic relationship between rhetoric and culture, and argue that it is time for anthropology to turn to rhetoric. Then follows an exposition of the epistemological issues involved in the juxtaposition of rhetoric and culture, both as objects and as instruments of discourse, ending with a pragmatic model that illustrates how cultures are interactive, autopoetic, self-organized configurations.

The chapter stresses the constitutive role of inward and outward rhetoric in the development of culture and the self and provides a sketch of *Don Quixote de la Mancha* as a paragon of rhetoric culture. The essay ends by returning to its initial theme, the relevance of Rhetoric Culture studies in periods of uncertainty.

In the second chapter, entitled "Precursors of Rhetoric Culture Theory," Christian Meyer, one of the core group that helped develop the Rhetoric Culture Project at the university of Mainz, retrieves crucial ideas of the past. He reviews those major landmarks in the history of rhetoric and ethnography that are particularly relevant for a rhetorical theory of culture, and he notes that the Sophistic movement—so important to the development of rhetoric—was the result of culture contact.

Their trading and confrontation with other peoples made the Greeks realize that the variety of styles of life, moral values, and traditions are a product of human rather than divine agency. Consequently, Isocrates, Protagoras, and other Greek rhetoricians emphasized the intersubjective character of truth and the importance of commonsense understanding. Cicero and Quintillian elaborated on these ideas, stressing the pedagogical role of rhetoric and its power to produce and reproduce civilization. Interestingly, we can detect here also the age-old presumptuousness that attributes superior knowledge to the rhetor who uses his or her special skills to lead other people out of their "brutish existence" and turn them into "responsible citizens."

Bacon and Vico also adhered to the idea that cultures pass through different stages of development, but more importantly they introduced the notion of culture-as-allegory. They saw cultural history, Meyer says, as a product of fantasy and poetic imagination. Nietzsche and Schopenhauer later held a similar view but added the provocative thesis that speaking subjects are themselves as figurative as the languages they speak. Governed not by reason but by irrational phantasms and inexplicable desires, human "will" is here understood to be the true source of all agency and history.

Following this continuing theme of rhetoric, scholars of the twentieth century explored the mediating role of rhetoric in culture. Meyer recalls how Burke developed the concepts of identification and psychic consubstantiality to explicate how rhetoric contributes to socialization, and how Blumenberg illuminated the constitutive role of rhetoric in culture by pointing out that "rhetoric creates institutions where there are no evidences." Kennedy, who inaugurated a new comparative rhetoric at the end of the twentieth century and therefore receives Meyer's special attention, did not speak of the rhetorical "will" but of rhetorical "energy" instead. Rhetoric is here defined as mental and emotional energy transmitted through communication, which is psychologically prior to an utterance and manifests itself not only in humans but in all social animals as well.

Meyer ends with an interesting turn to ethnography and shows how Rhetoric Culture ethnography was foreshadowed in the early work of Lafitau and Leenhardt, who learned from the (nonliterate!) people whom they studied how the word—that is rhetoric—plays a central role in the creation of culture.

While Meyer offers a diachronic view of the relevance of rhetoric for the study of culture, Peter Oesterreich, who is counted as one of the major figures in German *rhetorische Anthropologie* (see Gross, this volume), draws on classical rhetoric to demonstrate in "Homo Rhetoricus" how rhetoric is not only a means of communication with others, but also an instrument for shaping the self. Rhetoric is basically an appropriation and elaboration of practices inherent in language competence, and the five rhetorical arts are a heuristic key to the fundamental rhetorical competencies of everyday speech, indexing conventions that underlie the specific, common understandings that function as sources of everyday arguments.

Thus *inventio* illustrates the speaker's competence to invent or find appropriate arguments, and includes such items as subject, media, negotiation, and parties. Competence to order or organize arguments and topics is the heuristic of *dispositio,* which in turn is reflected in the competent use of tropes. *Memoria* is the competence to remember, and *actio* is the competence to perform. Oesterreich emphasizes throughout his chapter this relation of rhetorical categories to common, everyday thought and speech. Thus the traditional rhetorical triad of *movere, delectare,* and *docere* are merely elaborations of commonplace activities that involve "persuading," "pleasing," and "teaching" respectively. In emphasizing this idea of rhetorical practice as nontheoretical discourse, he underscores one of the themes of Cannada Bartoli's chapter concerning the experiential basis of the rhetoric of practice.

Daniel Gross, trained as classical rhetorician both in the United States and in Germany, focuses on "listening culture" as a neglected concept in both rhetoric and anthropology. He first raises questions about how we "hear" our own culture through personification, ethos, and the anxiety of influence, and then summarizes recent work in the Germanic tradition of *rhetorische Anthropologie*. He notes the inherent dilemma of universalism and particularism entailed by the conjunction of rhetoric and anthropology, and he argues that rhetoric, as a "supplement" to anthropology, runs the risk of losing its identity. Partly for this reason, he rejects the idea of building rhetorical anthropology on the model of philosophical anthropology. As for the rhetorical turn in anthropology and the anthropological turn in rhetoric, he notes that it is an incomplete project that has had little influence so far outside the Germanic context. He is nonetheless optimistic about the general direction of *rhetorische Anthropologie*.

The main section of Gross' chapter opens with the question, "What would rhetoric culture look like from the perspective of the auditor rather than the

speaker?" At the heart of this question is a complex of associations in which listening is thought to be largely passive, receptive, mimetic, and consequently, feminine. Countering these associations are the ideas of "active listening" and the "auditor-as-judge," both of which make listening agentive and critical. Gross argues that the active/passive dyad explicit in the ideas of speaker and hearer, can be overcome by focusing on what he calls the "public ear," the "technological ear," the "alienated ear," and the "socially deaf ear." With respect to these points he critically examines some seventeenth-century sermons and treatises on listening and finds strong arguments for the listener's agency in the construction and interpretation of discourse.

Anthropologist/philosopher Vincenzo Cannada Bartoli opens his essay "Practice of Rhetoric, Rhetoric of Practice" with a *chiasmus,* but he claims that only the first half of this *chiasmus* has been the object of theory. With Aristotle, he argues that the latter half is not learned through theory but rather is acquired through experience and practical mastery. The Aristotelian concept of *phronesis* as practical wisdom illustrates the case. In addition to *phronesis,* Aristotle attributed a moral dimension (*arête)* to practice. These ideas thus referenced a wider community as both the source and the justification for rhetorical practice. Cannada argues that the Marxist idea of *praxis* has a similar reference. Gramsci, for example, gave *praxis* two meanings. On the one hand, it referred to practices that transform the world, while on the other hand it referred to the "mass man" unconscious of his potentially transformative powers.

It seems that practice has three different roots: the first as the opposite of theory, the second as right conduct, and the third as practical wisdom. Cannada Bartoli identifies another *chiasmus* involving *ethos* and *kairos.* While *ethos* molds individuals and individuals mold *ethos, kairos* suggests something akin to "strategy" and thus implicates "agency," indeterminance, and the use of ruses. Cannada then argues that this perspective from *rhetorica utens* is more fruitful than *rhetorica docens*, which focuses on form rather than use.

By way of conclusion, Cannada Bartoli turns to empirical issues of social description, which lie, as he says, at the core of ethnography. He provides the example of ritual in a small contemporary Italian village, where problems of interpretation abound because local commentaries are often multivocal and saturated with "implicatures." Even more perplexing is ellipsis as part of a "rhetoric of anti-rhetoric," which Cannada Bartoli noted—but could not pin down—in an old woman's gesture of dismissal.

The last two chapters of Part I deepen our understanding of *chiasmus,* which has played a central role already in the preceding chapters. Boris Wiseman, a scholar of both French literature and anthropology, argues in "Chiastic Thought and Culture: A Reading of Claude Lévi-Strauss" that rhetorical figures are the means by which anthropology "grasps its object" and that *chias-*

mus inspires most, if not all of Claude Lévi-Strauss' thought and writing. He focuses on the moment when the "rhetoric of ethnography" converts into the "ethnography of rhetoric" and discovers *chiasmus* as inhering in all the themes that characterize Lévi-Strauss' most important works.

Wiseman traces *chiastic* processes of inverted parallelism or inverted symmetry in which two terms offer an inverted image of one another through several of Lévi-Strauss' well-known oppositions, such as "painting and music," " cold and hot societies," " ritual and game," and shows how Lévi-Strauss construes anthropology as a *chiastic* inversion of self and other. In the imagery of a canoe voyage, Lévi-Strauss moves though a transitional group of myths that constitute a schema in which, as one travels from the "near" to the "far," the values of these poles reverse so that the "near" becomes "far" and the "far" becomes "near." Wiseman details the characteristics of this canoe journey in terms of the *chiastic* opposition and reversal in myths and, in the end, effectively shows how it parallels Lévi-Strauss' major concerns in anthropology.

Building on his earlier study *The Torture of the Mind,* Anthony Paul—a literary scholar as well as a painter—explores in "When Fair is Foul and Foul is Fair: Lessons from Macbeth" the role of *chiasmus* in the drama of life and examines *chiasmus* as a rhetorical device for literary production and a form of mental and emotional experience in the work of Shakespeare.

In *Macbeth,* where it is the key to understanding the meanings of the play, *chiasmus* occurs in the form of mental estrangement, ironies, reversals, opposites, and contradictions. The famous chiastic line "fair is foul and foul is fair," uttered by the three witches, constitutes a paradox, a conundrum in which the individual elements are irresolvable. This language of contradiction characterizes Macbeth's inner hell in which there is no firm ground for action. The whole play is a series of such *chiasmi,* which Paul identifies in the patterning of deaths that re-echo one another throughout the play. Thus, in each of his murders Macbeth kills a part of himself. The death of Banquo is the central murder and the play's turning point where darkness moves toward light and social instability is replaced by stability.

In addition, Paul shows how the collision of primitive and advanced culture in *Macbeth* is a basic underlying *chiastic* theme that also appears in different forms in several of Shakespeare's other plays. The characters Othello and Iago, and Hamlet and the ghost of his father are prominent examples of this chiasm. Paul concludes with an account of how chiasm allows us not only to produce but also to discover meaning.

■ ■ ■

Part II, Figuration: The Persuasive Power of Deeds and Tropes, begins with a chapter by Alan Rumsey, who is well known for his work in anthro-

pological linguistics. In "Rhetoric, Truth, and the Work of Trope" he surveys a wide range of writings in classic and modern rhetoric, pragmatics, and the philosophy of language in search of a transformed, nondualistic understanding of language, which does not, as he says, "give pride of place" to truth-functional aspects of language or "devalue others as *mere* rhetoric." Generally, he argues for a study of the persuasive functions of language that takes into account that "speech-act types and communicative genres vary cross-culturally, both with respect to their distinctive formal features and with respect to their imputed pragmatic effects."

To substantiate the view that the work of trope is central to an understanding of language and culture, Rumsey then goes on to analyze macrotropes in ethnographic writing. He recalls Thornton's idea of "classification" as the means by which an ethnographic text builds up an image of the social whole. Although he finds Thornton's original formulation useful, he argues that there are other macrotropes that organize ethnographies, not all of which create images of a social whole. Instead of the part-to-whole trope discerned by Thornton, some ethnographies are cast (and thereby cast the social field) in terms of 1) mediating relations between social "systems," 2) whole-to-whole relations, or 3) "fragment-to-fragment" relations. Rumsey illustrates these different kinds of textual macrotropes through the analysis of four classic ethnographies, respectively: Radcliffe-Brown's *Three Tribes of Western Australia,* Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer,* Geertz's *The Religion of Java,* and Tsing's *In the Realm of the Diamond Queen.*

He argues that Radcliffe-Brown's writing strategy accomplishes a sense of wholeness through the technique of retrospective lines that link different sections of the text, each of which describes a certain range of sociocultural phenomena, which it treats as a distinct "system." This web of internal cross-reference creates an image of society as a set of interlocked relations. Evans-Pritchard, by contrast, enables a more open-ended, actor-oriented kind of cohesion by convincing us that Nuer themselves use their concepts of time and space, and of lineage structure, to mediate between distinct systems (the former to mediate between the "oecological system" and the "social system" and the latter to mediate—within the social system—between the "political system" and the "territorial system").

Geertz, on the other hand, links different levels by means of a whole-to-whole macrotrope, which he portrays as one that is used by the Javanese themselves to create the presumed social whole. A single small ceremony practiced at the village level functions as a "key symbol," or, as Geertz (1960: 11) put it, "a kind of social universal joint, fitting the various aspects of social life and individual experience together in a way that minimizes uncertainty, tension and conflict, or at least it is supposed to do so."

In effect Rumsey's analysis of "ethnographic macrotropes" deals with the use of the classical tropes at the level of the whole text rather than in the interanimation of utterances. His use here generally parallels that of Pepper's "root hypotheses" of "formism," "mechanism," and "contextual organicism," as these are discussed in Fernandez's chapter.

Philippe-Joseph Salazar—who holds the only African chair of rhetoric and combines deep knowledge of both anthropology and classical rhetoric—explicates in "Figuration, A Common Ground of Rhetoric and Anthropology" how figures, figurations, and fiction penetrate culture. He focuses on social agency and the role of rhetoric in social action. He also addresses the question of disciplinary boundaries, borders, and invasions manifest in the use and misuse of rhetoric in other disciplines, and although he recalls earlier misunderstandings, even hostility, he notes that more recently "a certain amount of respect, trust, admiration even, has begun to manifest itself" within academia, a point that is of great importance given the interdisciplinary ambitions of the Rhetoric Culture project.

Salazar emphasizes the role of figuration as a departure from or a reshaping of taken-for-granted distinctions, and he regards fiction as the construction of persuasive scenarios that become common knowledge. In a brief analysis of Bourdieu and Mauss, he notes their respective uses of fiction and figuration and then, as an example of "how anthropology and rhetoric can find fertile common ground on the question of figuration," he proceeds to a discussion of the way these enfigurations function in the discourse of "reconciliation" in South Africa. He argues that this discourse is a model of the common ground between the disciplines of anthropology and rhetoric. The figuration of "exoneration" was the main point of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Perpetrators of gross abuses of civil rights were brought before the commission to express repentance and to solicit forgiveness. In a theatrical setting, these public figures performed a figuration of conformance to, and confirmation of, the *logos*.

Finally, Salazar calls attention to the fact that since its inception in ancient Greece, rhetoric has carried within itself the spirit of democracy, and he warns against an "instrumentation of rhetoric" that applies the latter to an analysis of local cultures without any awareness of the pedagogical, democratic project enshrined in the concept of rhetoric.

"Tropical Foundations and Foundational Tropes of Culture" by James Fernandez follows an invitation of the editors not to focus—as in his earlier pioneering work—on the "play" but on the "foundational" role of tropes in culture. In order to achieve this, Fernandez examines the foundational concepts in contemporary tropology, and argues that tropes in their various forms are ways of attempting to control the flux of social life. He traces the historical-

philosophical foundations of recurrent "master tropes" from their origins in pre-Socratic writings through Vico to the present. He outlines Pepper's idea of "root hypotheses," which represents tropes as being either "analytic" or "synthetic," the former comprising "formist" and "mechanist" tropes and the latter the tropes of "contextualism " and "organicism."

In addition to Bakhtin's dualistic chronotopes of time and space, he notes the dichotomizing tendency in contemporary foundational accounts that inscribe characterological oppositions between Northern and Southern peoples or between "soul and system" or "spirit and system." Such oppositions frequently inspire or enable dialectical resolutions.

Among psychobiological and cognitive foundations he isolates the tropes of "association," "collective representation," "laws of thought," and "primitive mentality" as these are represented particularly in psychoanalysis and structuralism. These tropes have in common the search for underlying realities that are obscured by surface representations. He concludes with a discussion of contemporary cognitive approaches as these are represented primarily in Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By.* At the end of his essay, Fernandez argues that the search for foundations is not a primary goal of anthropology. Anthropologists are more interested in how tropes "play" in the negotiation of commitments.

Michael Herzfeld, a scholar of Mediterranean societies and heir to many of Vico's original ideas, rethinks in "Convictions: Embodied Rhetorics of Earnest Belief" some of his earlier theoretical explorations of poetics in social relations. He identifies the conjunction of symbolism and materialism as the central issue in the production of ethnographies. This idea is captured by the concept of "social poetics," an idea that he prefers to "rhetoric culture" on the ground that it is less susceptible to reification. His essay focuses on the idea of "conviction" and the role of "disclaimers" as ironic modes in the performance of "sincerity." Master symbolic forms of morality give the appearance of addressing moral issues, but are actually duplicitous. Duplicity in discourse involves the management of appearances where "conviction" is a matter of performance rather than belief.

His evidence derives from Italian and Greek usages in which people are understood to be imperfect. Consequently, failure to observe moral principles is to be expected, and the means of reconciling these failures requires techniques for "papering over" the differences. The successful mastery of these techniques trumps ideas of transparency, honesty, and sincerity. Infractions are justified in the name of some greater good. Since meaning is contingent and unstable over time, the principles of sincerity and authenticity are contextualized. Dissimulation, in particular, is acceptable in defense of family interests. In the end, Herzfeld concludes that sincerity is communicated most effectively by

means of gesture and bodily movement. It is a performance rather than a belief and it confirms the adage, "It's not so much what he said, but how he said it."

In a short, provocative essay called "An Epistemological Query" Pierre Maranda raises three interesting issues that involve unspoken meaning and address some of the standard assumptions about rhetoric and communication generally. He calls these the "minimal audience," the "minimum speech," and "nonhuman rhetoric." In the first case, the speaker and the hearer are one and the same. This is similar in its implications to the idea of "shaping the self" in Oesterreich's chapter. The second issue invokes the notion of response. Maranda asks what are the different implications of a speech event that requires a response and one that does not and indirectly points to context as the crucial element—that which allows one to understand what is meant but not said, what is implied but not explicit.

On the topic of animal communication, Maranda argues that much animal communication can be seen as rhetorical. Here his argument parallels the ideas about animal and insect communication discussed in Kennedy's text on comparative rhetoric (see also Meyer's and Rumsey's essays). As in that work, Maranda traces a cline of kinds and modes of rhetoric that characterize human/human, human/animal, and animal/animal communication.

Although he does not himself say so, Paul Friedrich—known for his fine analysis of language, literature, and culture—leads us in his essay "Beyond the Unsaid: Transcending Language Through Language" toward an understanding of an issue that lies at the very heart of the Rhetoric Culture project. Unlike earlier anthropological researches in conceptualization, classification, and cognition, and also unlike more recent investigations of the constitutive role of tropes in culture, rhetoric culture studies also aim to understand how "unspeakable"—even "unthinkable"—realms of our existence are addressed rhetorically, and how culture-specific intimations of transcendence are created. Moral values, ethical doctrines, and religious beliefs are grounded in such "intimations," which by their very nature evade plain style and are only accessible indirectly, that is, through evocation.

Friedrich provides a thorough analysis of the ways in which such "intimations of the unmanifest beyond the manifest" can be achieved. He uses the writings of Thoreau as exemplary instances of texts that achieve a kind of ontological transcendence. Seven figurative uses of language are at work here, and of these, three defy analogy and four resist closure.

Friedrich illustrates resistance to analogy by outlining the techniques Thoreau used to challenge the oversimplifications of analogy. Mysterious images and disintegrative images mix and deconstruct the terms of an analogy and in so doing open up intuitions of the unmanifest. "Dialectical contrast" is another way to suggest what analysis fails to provide. Two or more images or

metaphors may mingle and suggest transcendence, as, for example, in the climactic metaphors of process and stasis. The "unacceptable signified," as exemplified in various triadic structures, is another means for suggesting what could never be literal.

There are three ways of resisting closure. The infinite sentence meanders or crowds the page with lists and thus suggests an infinitude of possibilities. Thematic oxymorons and the space between juxtaposed opposites are other ways of resisting closure and suggesting the unmanifest. Deliberately ambiguous rhetoric that encourages multiple interpretations also opens up closure.

Friedrich concludes by limning six negative uses of language that ultimately deny the possibility of meaning in language. Against these negative uses he suggests positive alternatives, all of which enable transcendence. The figurative energies of language overcome the negative uses and enable both communication and meaning. By means of the seven figurative uses outlined above, the infinite and divine plenitude of language reaches into the unmanifest beyond the manifest.

The book closes with a kind of "fanfare" by Robert Hariman—a scholar of rhetoric and public culture—who in "Future Imperfect: Imagining Rhetorical Culture" characterizes (tongue in cheek?) the tendencies and aims of the Rhetoric Culture project as excessively ambitious. He initially notes that excess is always scandalous because it destabilizes the social order and reveals human society as a complex of conventional rather than universal truths, and then he goes on to say that anthropology and rhetoric are similarly constrained and enabled by relativism.

After briefly recalling the scene of the Rhetoric Culture conferences with their excess of jumbled symbols, mixed artifacts, and conflicting themes, Hariman identifies these elements as figures in the trope of "allegory" that enacts multiple interpretations. He cites Nietzsche and Blumberg with respect to the use of extravagant means as supplements to the cognitive deficiencies that characterize human understanding, and he finds this same relation between cognitive deficiency and discursive excess in the work of anthropologists where "semiotic excess and cultural pluralism combine to dislodge any claim to a universally valid hierarchy of morals, knowledge, art, politics."

Rhetoric Culture studies, he says, operate in the chasm between parodic and catastrophic projections in the realm of a "future imperfect" that fuses excess and deficit. Although he acknowledges parody as a way of exposing the false claims of foundationalism and deploys catastrophe as a way of revealing limitations on the power of humans to remake nature and themselves, Hariman throughout argues for allegory as the trope that helps us to imagine some kind of utopia, for when cultures function well, he says, they are like "large allegorical works and provide the artistic context for all of life."

Notes

1. Dell Hymes heralded this movement with his essay on *The Ethnography of Speaking* (1962). The empirical studies that followed were so diverse that we cannot mention them all. But we like to recall at least some of them, especially the compendia, which contain a host of brilliant contributions. First to appear were John Gumperz and Dell Hymes, eds. (1972), *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication;* Richard Bauman and Joel Sherzer, eds. (1974), *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking;* and Maurice Bloch, ed. (1975), *Political Language and Oratory in Traditional Society.* Later followed Richard Bauman and Joel Sherzer, eds. (1982), *Case Studies in the Ethnography of Speaking;* James W. Fernandez (1982), *Bwiti: An Ethnography of the Religious Imagination in Africa*; Donald Brenneis and Fred Myers, eds. (1984), *Dangerous Words: Language and Politics in the Pacific;* Deborah Tannen and Muriel Saville-Troike, eds. (1985), *Perspectives on Silence;* Paul Friedrich (1986), *The Princes of Naranja: An Essay in Anthropological Method;* Joel Sherzer and Anthony Woodbury, eds. (1987), *Native American Discourse: Poetics and Rhetoric;* and James Fox, ed. (1988), *To Speak in Pairs: Essays on the Ritual Languages of Eastern Indonesia.*

   Among the anthropological monographs that have played a seminal role and have paved the way for a study of the nexus between culture and rhetoric are Geneviève Calame-Griaule (1986 [1965]), *Words and the Dogon World;* Michelle Rosaldo (1980), *Knowledge and Passion: Ilongot Notions of Self and Social Life;* E. Valentine Daniel (1984), *Fluid Signs: Being a Person the Tamil Way*; Lila Abu-Lughod (1986), *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society;* Charles Briggs (1988), *Competence in Performance: The Creativity of Tradition in Mexicano Verbal Art;* Joel Kuipers (1990), *Power in Performance: The Creation of Textual Authority in Weyewa Ritual Speech;* Francesca Merlan and Alan Rumsey (1991), *Ku Waru: Language and Segmentary Politics in the Western Nebilyer Valley, Papua New Guinea;* Karen Brison (1992), *Just Talk: Gossip, Meetings, and Power in a Papua New Guinea Village;* Bambi Schieffelin (1990), *The Give and Take of Everyday Life*: *Language Socialization of Kaluli Children;* and Alessandro Duranti (1994), *From Grammar to Politics: Linguistic Anthropology in a Western Samoan Village.* The theoretical insights and fine-grained empirical analyses that characterize these ethnographies of communication and culture have pioneered a rhetorical theory of culture even though most if not all of them have studiously avoided *rhetoric,* a term that remained conspicuously absent, and a discipline that seemed to have vanished altogether from the horizon.
2. Most important was Ivor Richards. In his lectures on *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936/1965) he introduced the terms *tenor* and *vehicle* to analyze the internal dynamics of metaphoric expression and offered not only a new "anatomy of metaphor"—as David Sapir later on was to call it—but also helped to better understand the problem of "coping with metaphor." The *similarities* and *disparities* between *tenor* and *vehicle* that we encounter in metaphor only allow unstable, multivocal interpretations, which people often find disturbing even though it is impossible to live without them. Richards, for whom the true work of words was "to restore life itself to order" (1965: 134), therefore spoke of the *command* of metaphor. Metaphors *command* interpretations, which in turn "can go deeper still in the control of the world that we make for ourselves to live in." Note how close he also was to the idea of *rhetoric culture* when he wrote: "Thus in happy living the same patterns are exemplified and the same risks of error are avoided as in tactful and discerning reading. The general form of the interpretative

process is the same, with a small-scale instance—the right understanding of a figure of speech—or with the large scale instance—the conduct of a friendship" (1956: 136).

Influenced by Ivor Richards as well as Kenneth Burke (1945, 1957, 1966), Roman Jakobson (1956), Claude Lévi-Strauss (1962), and Max Black (1962), research on figuration—and metaphor in particular—speeded up in the 1960s/70s and has continued to this day. Stanley Tambiah (1968, 1969), Renato Rosaldo (1968), Michelle Rosaldo (1973, 1982, 1986), Victor Turner (1975), Thomas Beidelman (1975), Andrew Ortony, ed. (1979), Paul Ricoeur (1981), Paul Friedrich (1986, 1991), and James Fernandez (1982, 1986, 1991 ed.) are just some of the outstanding contributions in this field.

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Part I

The Chiasm of Rhetoric and Culture

CHAPTER 1

The Rhetoric Culture Project

Stephen Tyler and Ivo Strecker

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The Rhetoric Culture[1] project arises from a fundamental chiasmus that leads us to explore the ways in which rhetoric structures culture and culture structures rhetoric. It calls for a program of research whose basic topics are the interrelationships between cultural forms of practice, passion, and reason; and it seeks to understand the culturally generated orders of discourse—and their technologies of production.

In a world whose imaginative processes and social structures are seemingly undergoing dramatic reconfiguration brought about by the technology of the Internet and other media, it may seem anachronistic to look for inspiration in rhetoric, which many would not hesitate to call antiquated, even discredited. These new technologies of communication have, however, merely brought problems of social order into sharper focus, without being able to provide solutions to the problems they entail. It is for this reason that we turn to rhetoric, for rhetoric holds out the possibility of a contemporary discussion that is not at the outset informed and predetermined by the structure of technology.

This is no mere nostalgia, and we conjure no elegies for lost utopias. Rather, we argue that rhetoric, long abused in the modern era, has emerged in postmodern times as an organizing concept for an all-embracing study of discourse and culture. Its emergence is coupled with a crisis in representation brought on by the failure of the foundational metaphor of "language-as-the-mirror-of-the-real" (Rorty 1979). The concept of representation, of the substitution of signs for originary objects, enabled a consensual community

sustained by an order of discourse founded in reason, truth, logic, and plain style, and was based in the separation of fact and value and in the idea of language as a transparent medium having a shared code and an analytically determined essence.

Modernity evolved under the aegis of a technology of representation using moveable type, the idea of the book, and of writing as the dominant instrument of reason. That technology is passing, being replaced by other forms of imaging and storing information (Ong 1982). This "new imaginary" accomplishes a redirection of human action and intention that is essentially a return to the rhetorical ideas of *inventio* and *memoria,* and despite its electronic gadgetry, aligns itself more closely to the means of oral discourse than with those of writing-in-the-sense-of-the-book.

Rhetoric is often understood as a mere instrumentality, a means of persuasion, but it is as frequently treated as an object of discourse. These uses of rhetoric are not independent and may be deployed alternatively or even simultaneously. The interplay between these modes of instrument and object also characterizes the discourse about culture. Culture, or cultures, can be discursive objects at the same time as they are self-revealing instrumentalities of a discourse. Objects and instruments of discourse are thus co-constitutive, autopoetic processes in which objects become the objects they are by means of their instrumentalities, and their instrumentalities become the instrumentalities they are by means of their objects. This same process characterizes the relationship between rhetoric and culture. While rhetoric can be the instrument with which we describe and understand culture as the object, culture is also the instrument through which we understand and locate rhetoric.

Inasmuch as we think of rhetoric taking itself as its own reflexive object, we are tempted to think of this moment in which rhetoric is displaced into its own instrumentality as some kind of higher order meta-discourse that we might call the theory of rhetoric, but that is not the case. The interaction and interpenetration here has no dialectical consequence in which object and instrument are overcome or subsumed under some more inclusive neutralization or transcendence of their supposed opposition. There is instead a kind of alternation between object and instrument that may produce change but no necessary development. The same kind of relation obtains in the case of culture taking itself as its own object.

This underlying reciprocity enables different moments in the interaction of culture and rhetoric. One possibility, and perhaps the easiest to conjure, is the ethnographic account of rhetorical practices in different cultures, what we might call the single-voiced rhetoric of a culture in which rhetoric is a cultural object, as it might be in something like "The Rhetoric of Koya Marriage Nego-

tiation." In a more complex form, we have critical accounts of those rhetorical practices that enable the production of cultural descriptions and comparisons. Here the focus shifts to something like "the rhetoric of the description." While we might call the first mode "rhetoric in culture" and the second "rhetoric of culture," it should be understood that both modes are usually carried out simultaneously. The critical moment might be something as simple as appendages to a description in the form of asides, footnotes, skeptical queries, framing stories, or the poetry of methodology. Here the monological voice of the observer becomes a skeptical dialogical voice conducting a kind of internal argument with itself or imagined others. In more interesting reflexive ethnographies, such as Gregory Bateson's *Naven* (1936), these modes of critical commentary are more complex. They consist of deconstructive, internal reflections on intention, inference, evidence, and representation in which Iatmul culture is produced simultaneously with its dissolution. In either case, these marginalia, whether they are in the form of internal commentary or of external intertextual critique, destabilize both the initial account and themselves.

The Rhetoric Culture project explores the possibilities afforded by rhetoric to explain culture. It does this by paying more attention to the hidden in social discourse, the unsaid behind the said, the latent beneath the manifest, and the unreasonable as well as the reasonable sides of human existence. It emphasizes multivocality as much as univocality, understanding as much as translation, imagination as much as decodation, and it adds, or rather brings back, the ideas of emergence, creativity, construction, and negotiation to the ideas of episteme, knowledge, representation, rules, and symbol/sign systems. But it does this without necessary reference to the notion of meaning, for understanding is not exclusively or even primarily dependent on meaning, or knowing the meaning, or symbol interpretation, but comes about as much through sensibility, which includes sense making, feelings and empathy.

Here the ideas of story and exempla are of key concern, for when we understand something, it is more often than not because it is embedded in a story or examples, where particulars portend the whole. Rhetoric Culture studies acknowledge this central role of narrative and the unfolding character of understanding, and seek to give an account of the imaginative resources that ground our approximations and yield our openings and closings.

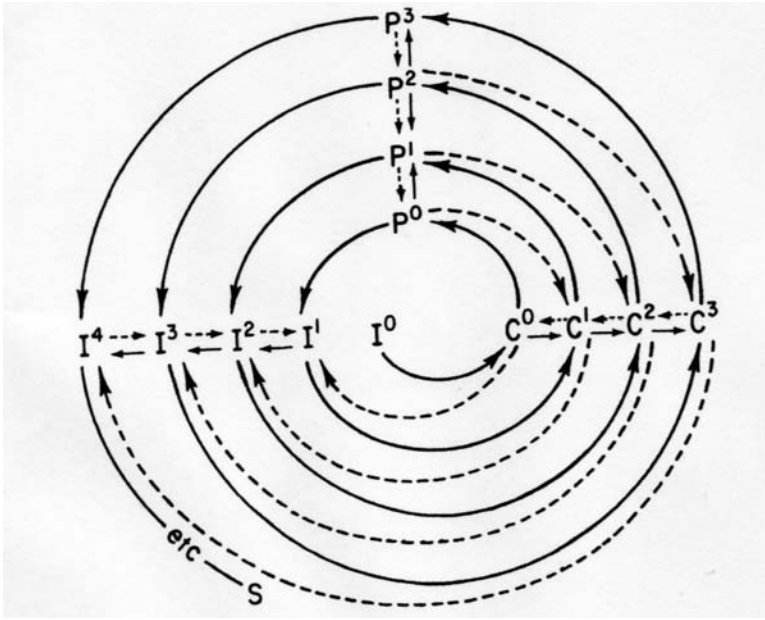
The concept of rhetoric culture does not accord with those oppositions between literate and nonliterate, civilized and savage, fact and fiction, origin and telos, culture and nature, signifier and signified, spirit and material, mind and body, reason and passion, figurative and literal, apparent and real, or past and present that made the structure of modern dialectic and constituted themselves in easy antithesis. Similarly, it does not privilege speech over writing and

is responsive to all technologies of discourse. It does not give priority to either the speaker (the oratorical mode) or the hearer (the hermeneutic), or to the code (structuralism). Classical rhetoric privileged the idea of the speaker and the speech event. Later rhetoric privileged the author of the text. No one (except in later hermeneutics) consistently adopted the perspective of the hearer. Critique focused chiefly on the text as a structural object or a code of symbols. We do not want to abandon these loci, but argue that no one of them alone dominates as the origin or starting point of understanding. Partly as a consequence of not privileging the code, the idea of Rhetoric Culture does not privilege truth over opinion or persuasion. These, and others, are merely kinds of things we try to do in communication. Consequently, it is better to abandon the idea of independent genres correlated with the different modes of rhetoric (*logos, ethos, pathos*).

We may give the appearance of separately engaging one or another of these modes for "rhetorical" purposes. Common practices in scientific writing, for example, are entrained in order to give the appearance of a discourse structured and motivated solely by logos. Similarly, we may wish to convey moral certitudes without appeals to reason as if these certitudes were reason unto themselves, or at least beyond reason. In our everyday discourse as well, we trim these different rhetorical modes to the measure of our needs and desires, exploiting their possibilities either separately or jointly as we judge their relative efficacy in the emergent situation they create—as in the strategies of politeness analyzed by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson (1978).

Even so, we are not in complete control of our instruments. Much as we may try to exploit these different modes, either by separating them or by compounding them into judicious mixtures, we cannot really employ one of them in complete isolation from the others any more than we can fully control or predict the synergies of their combinations. At best, we manage to convey the appearance of control, which fortunately is sufficient to the moment, or at least as it is judged by its contemporary effects. All fixed genres are mixed to various degrees and in various ways, and all exceed our attempts to keep them under our thumbs. Even if we could achieve total authorial control, our audiences and interpreters might nullify or reconfigure our intended effects, for there is no way effectively to control the interpretive responses of our interlocutors.

The following model illustrates this open-ended and emergent nature of discourse. It shows how in prospective and retrospective fashion, speakers' intentions (I), their competence (C) or awareness of existing conventions, and their performances (P) are linked and act upon each other. The visual representation of the model is a spiral—or rather two superimposed spirals—showing the prospective and retrospective elements in the I-C-P triad, consisting of a number of cycles, which may range from 1 to *n* (Tyler 1978: 137).



The I-C-P model illustrates what we have emphasized above: cultures are interactive, autopoetic, self-organized configurations. They are emergent, instrumental adaptations characterized by rhythmic, sequential, oscillating iterations manifested as transitions in phase space where each state is new and all states are bound together by resonance, tuning, and feedback. Phases are dissipative, responsive to emergent, interactive features that function reflexively as both constraints and telos. The model has a dialectical form in which components are simultaneously cause and effect, and all components are co-constructed, co-dependent, and co-determined.

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Following Wilhelm von Humboldt, the Rhetoric Culture project emphasizes the ontological unity of *oratio* and *ratio* in *logos* and insists that reason is inseparable from language; thought inseparable from speech. The "I," as von Humboldt has said, critically depends on the "You." The "I" needs the "You," whose power of thought radiates back to the "I," and vice versa. As the "I" and the "You" engage in discourse, their very use of language presupposes the other's power of thought, although both also know from experience the dangers of misunderstanding inherent in the use of language. We humans simply have no other choice than to engage in inward and outward rhetoric, for between the thought of the "I" and the thought of the "You" there is "no other mediator but language" (1995: 24).

Both inward and outward rhetoric are thus constitutive of culture, as Jean Nienkamp has explored more fully in her historical sketch of the modalities and relationships between internal rhetorics and public rhetoric or oratory. She provides striking examples of internal rhetoric in very early Greek texts such as the *Iliad,* which are of particular import here. Thus, we hear Odysseus talk to himself in the midst of battle:

> Now Odysseus the spear-famed was left alone, nor did any
> of the Argives stay beside him, since fear had taken all of them.
> And troubled, *he spoke then to his own great-hearted spirit:*
> 'Ah me, what will become of me? It will be a great evil
> if I run, fearing their multitude, yet deadlier if I am caught
> alone; and Kronos' son drove to flight the rest of the Danaans.
> Yet still, *why does the heart within me debate on these things?*
> Since I know that it is the cowards who walk out of the fighting,
> but if one is to win honor in battle, he must by all means
> stand his ground strongly, whether he be struck or strike down another.'
> *While he was pondering these things in his heart and his spirit.*
> (italics by Nienkamp 2001: 12)

Nienkamp stresses that this example shows how rhetoric is an almost timeless general human disposition, and she applauds Susan Jarratt for arguing that, "mythic discourse is capable of containing the beginnings of a 'rhetorical consciousness'" (Jarratt 1991: 35). Furthermore, she distinguishes between an orthodox position that restricts the definition of rhetoric to oratory, and a position that sees "all human meaning-making as rhetorical," and which she calls "expansive" (Nienkamp 2001). Proponents of the latter view such as Lloyd Bitzer and Edwin Black (1971: 208) include in rhetoric all forms of human communication as well as all symbolic expressions that have the capacity to influence human life, and John Bender and David Wellbery speak of "rhetoricality" as a frame of mind, arguing for instance that "*Modernism is an age not of rhetoric, but of rhetoricality,* the age, that is, of a generalized rhetoric that penetrates to the deepest levels of human experience" (Nienkamp 2001: 3).

Nienkamp concludes that "in a sense, rhetoric has come full circle in its expansive manifestation: the broader sophistic concern with all of *logos* (language, speech, reasoning, thought) that was codified into the art of persuasive speaking and writing is now being broadened again to cover the contemporary equivalent of *logos:* a concern with how language in all of its manifestations influences humans (and sometimes other sentient beings)" (2001: 3).

This is also part of the Rhetoric Culture project, which investigates how our minds are filled with images and ideas, and how these remain unstable and incomplete as long as we do not manage to persuade both ourselves and others

of their meanings. It is this inward and outward rhetoric that allows us to give some kind of shape and structure to our understanding of the world, and that becomes central to the formation of individual and collective consciousness.

Kenneth Burke, who transformed "Aristotelian" rhetoric into "post-Christian" rhetoric—and who may justly be called one of the forebears of current Rhetoric Culture studies—also saw the crucial role of internal rhetorics and emphasized that a mixture of inward and outward rhetoric plays a central role in socialization and hence in the formation of cultural conventions and patterns of behavior. Here it may suffice to quote the famous passage where he speaks of the need to be "alert to the ingredient of rhetoric in all *socialization,* considered as a *moralizing* process. The individual person, striving to form himself in accordance with the communicative norms that match the cooperative ways of his society, is by the same token concerned with the rhetoric of identification. To act upon himself persuasively, he must variously resort to images and ideas that are formative. Education ('indoctrination') exerts such pressure upon him from without; he completes the process from within. If he does not somehow act to tell himself (as his own audience) what the various brands of rhetorician have told him, his persuasion is not complete. Only those voices from without are effective which can speak in the language of a voice within" (Burke 1950: 39).

We have chosen Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's *Don Quixote de la Mancha* as icon of the Rhetoric Culture project (see Strecker 2007) because it is perhaps the most persuasive example of the rhetorically produced and fantastic nature of culture. No other book contains so many conversations or is more based on dialogue than *Don Quixote,* and all the events in the book appear to be there only to provoke exchanges between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Cervantes himself is said to have wanted to create a work of "uplifting rhetoric," and he was indeed very successful in this. As one keeps reading one dramatic conversation after the other—including innumerable exclamations, courtesies, curses and blessings—one gets the feeling that human life is not only shaped and articulated, but even driven, by rhetoric.

Don Quixote acts fantastically because he has read too many fantastic books. The epics praising the great valor and charm of knights like Roland, el Cid and so on, have driven him insane, so that he now chooses himself a gentle lady—a butcher's daughter whom he calls Dulcinea de Toboso—and sets out to put the world right, like those ancient knights used to do. This is where the deeply ironical-cum-allegorical dimension of the story lies: The historically "displaced" behavior of Don Quixote brings out the odd and fantastic dimensions of earlier ways of life.

After Don Quixote rode into battle on the back of his horse Rosinante, broke his spear in one of the wings of a windmill, was thrown down and lay

battered on the ground, Sancho said to him, "didn't I tell you that these are windmills that everyone would know who does not have windmills in his head himself." Don Quixote answers promptly that Sancho should shut up because he did not know that Freston, a sorcerer and great adversary of Don Quixote, had turned the giants into windmills. So, however bizarre a situation and however devastating a defeat may be, the genius of Don Quixote's internal rhetorics will gain the upper hand.

Don Quixote can thus be understood as an allegory of culturally induced madness. On one level this is plain to see because Cervantes begins his novel with a scene where members of Don Quixote's household and his friends burn, destroy, and hide all the books that have caused the insanity of Don Quixote and that will lead to all the unimaginable adventures that make up the story. But on his way, the crazy knight meets countless characters who are almost as mad as himself. Here, in this complex layering of characters and situations, lies the great art of Cervantes. He creates a hero who is ostentatiously irrational and moves in a world that is supposed to be rational. Yet, most of the people whom Don Quixote meets and to whose stories he listens are also driven by fantasies and prone to act only a shade less insane than Don Quixote.

Rhetoric flowers in periods of uncertainty. Perhaps it is because we are now in such a period when neither modernism nor postmodernism affords easy certainties of knowledge and clear directions for research that we feel impelled to turn to rhetoric. Or perhaps we seek hybrid forms because new technologies of figuration enable a kind of recontextualization of rhetorical forms once thought to have been outmoded. Then too, it might be that our sense of being in perilous times (see Volume III in the *Studies in Rhetoric and Culture* series) causes us to reevaluate the role of accepted forms of knowledge and representation. Whatever the motivating circumstances may be, it is clear that disciplines must now reconfigure themselves, for the familiar certainties that once formed the structure of our understanding and produced the possibilities of study and research now seem already to belong to another time and are no longer directly accessible as instrumentalities of our constructive imagination.

Note

1. Critics have objected to our collocation *rhetoric culture,* saying that an unmediated juxtaposition of the two terms leaves one wondering whether rhetoric and culture are meant to be one, or whether these are distinct concepts in which case one would need "rhetoric *and* culture" to make an interplay possible. To this we answered that it would be easy to reinsert *in, and,* or *of* between *rhetoric* and *culture.* But this would weaken our project considerably, for the boldness would disappear in the same way as it does when one moves from metaphor to simile. Heuristically, we said, one would need to

bring the two terms close together, separate them, bring them close, separate them, and so on, for both interact in what one might call a "chiastic spin."

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CHAPTER 2

Precursors of Rhetoric Culture Theory

Christian Meyer

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Rhetoric Culture theory has its roots in a long history, and in what follows I present some of the ideas that scholars—mainly rhetoricians, but also some philosophers—have developed over the centuries in order to grasp the difficult and complex relationship between rhetoric, culture, and humanity. Throughout, I have given priority to the voices of the precursors of Rhetoric Culture theory and have kept my own interpretation and comments to a minimum. At the end, I recall the work of scholars who were among the first to empirically study the constitutive role of rhetoric in non-European cultures.

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The scholarly myth of origin has it that the term *rhetoric* developed in Ancient Greece under specific circumstances. The driving force was political change during the sixth and fifth century BCE. At that time, a federation of several *poleis* emerged with each *polis* sending representatives to regular councils where decisions concerning the federation were made. Competent orators for the councils, courts, and other social occasions were needed to present the concerns of the polis. The time for each speech was limited so that orators had to be brief and concise, since decisions were taken directly after their presentations (cf. Nietzsche 1989; Meier 1990). Furthermore, in these developing ancient democracies it was important for everyone to defend his rights in court. Thus, much of Greek rhetoric had its origin in a nonviolent struggle

for one's rights against other members of society (Barthes 1988: 20). Ancient Greek rhetoric developed as part of a wider political and legal culture.

The travels of the orators (politicians) from their respective poleis to others as well as the stories they told about them in their home *agora,* caused many Greeks to adopt a detached perspective and look at Greek culture from the outside. This is also expressed in early accounts of other societies, other languages, and other ways of life (see Herodotus of Halikarnassos *Histories;* cf. Müller 1972: 101–132).

The main proactive intellectual group who promoted this opening of Greek cultural horizon was the "Sophistic Movement" (Kerferd 1981). The Sophists traveled throughout Greece and taught rhetoric with all its practical techniques such as short and concise expression, effective argumentation, convincing performance, adaptation of speech to the respective audience, and the importance of specific *topoi.* Furthermore, they taught grammar, semantics, rhythm, and tone (Baumhauer 1986).

Protagoras (490–411 BCE) was one of these traveling Sophists who encountered social systems that fundamentally differed from their own. Thus, according to him, justice was not an absolute but a socially created good: "whatever seems right and honourable to a state [i.e., a polis] is really right and honourable to it, so long as it believes it to be so" (Plato *Theaetetus,* 167c).

Critias (460–403 BCE) emphasized that social institutions also served social goals:

> There was a time when the life of men was unordered, bestial and the slave of force, when there was no reward for the virtuous and no punishment for the wicked. Then, I think, men devised laws of retribution in order that Justice might be dictator and have arrogance as its slave, and if anyone sinned, he was punished. Then, when the laws forbade them to commit open crimes of violence, and they began to do them in secret, a wise and clever man invented fear (of the gods) for mortals, that there might be some means of frightening the wicked, even if they do anything or say or think it in secret. Hence, he introduced the Divine, saying that there is a God flourishing with immortal life, hearing and seeing with his mind, and thinking of everything and caring about these things, and having divine nature, who will hear everything said among mortals, and will be able to see all that is done (Diels 1971: 157–158).

Prodikos (465 or 450–399 BCE), in contrast, taught that gods were the product of thankfulness for the useful sun, moon, rivers, and springs. Bread was therefore associated with the goddess Demeter, wine with Dionysus, water with Poseidon, fire with Hephaestus, and so it was with all things that were of use for human life (Freeman 1966: 373–374).

The aforementioned Protagoras is also remembered for his homo-mensura theorem: "Of all things the measure is Man" (Diels 1971: 125; cf. Pleger 1991: 139–48), which did not, however, mean that the human species was at the summit of creation and in possession of absolute comprehension, but on the contrary that man was only able to understand, judge, and explain matters that were in reach of his mental and emotional or, as Rhetoric Culture theory would add, rhetorical faculties.

Hence, the most important contribution of the Sophists was philosophical, or rather anthropological (Pleger 1991: 26), for even though they did not have a separate term for it, culture as a new phenomenon had entered their awareness and inspired most of their thinking. Material objects, language, customs, education, political organization, religion, law and the like were now considered to be products of man and not of the gods. They were culturally contingent *nómoi* or *thései,* and not *physei.*

The Sophist Isocrates (436–338 BCE) presented perhaps the most coherent ancient version of Rhetoric Culture theory. I quote here what he said in his *Antidosis* (354–353 BCE):

> In most of our abilities we differ not at all from the animals; we are in fact behind many in swiftness and strength and other resources. But because there is born in us the power to persuade each other and to show ourselves whatever we wish, we not only have escaped from living as brutes, but also by coming together have founded cities and set up laws and invented arts, and speech has helped us attain practically all of the things we have devised. For it is speech that has made laws about justice and injustice and honour and disgrace, without which provisions we should not be able to live together. By speech we refute the wicked and praise the good. By speech we educate the ignorant and inform the wise. (Isocrates 1928: 326).

Shortly after, he explicitly mentions the *rhêtorikoi:*

> We regard speaking well to be the clearest sign of a good mind, which it requires, and truthful, lawful, and just speech we consider the image (*eidolon*) of a good and faithful soul. With speech we fight over contentious matters, and we investigate the unknown. We use the same arguments by which we persuade others in our own deliberations; we call those able to speak in a crowd "rhetorical" (*rhêtorikoi*); we regard as sound advisers those who debate with themselves most skillfully about public affairs. If one must summarize the power of discourse, we will discover that nothing done prudently occurs without speech (*logos*), that speech is the leader of all thoughts and actions, and that the most intelligent people use it most of all. (Isocrates 2000: 255–57)

All the examples show how the Sophists discovered culture as something man had created and agreed upon, and—most importantly—had produced through persuasive speech. They deeply thought about the question of how human culture developed and found that rhetoric was one of the driving forces of cultural change: "As practitioners and teachers of rhetoric, the Sophists made Greece aware of her culture" (Poulakos 1983: 36, cf. Jarratt 1990).

The Sophists also dealt with questions of intersubjective truths and commonsense knowledge (*doxa*) that foreshadowed present-day anthropological concerns. They provided functionalist explanations for social institutions just as Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown did in saying that they strengthen in-group coherence. The Sophists also cultivated an explicit cultural relativism similar to Boas's, claiming that all cultural phenomena and utterances were contextually shaped and understandable only by taking into account the insider's perspective. For this (and for other reasons not mentioned in this short outline) we may rightly consider the Sophists to be the first documented theorists of rhetoric culture.

Much later, in the Roman Republic, Cicero (106–43 BCE) followed Isocrates, saying:

> There is to my mind no more excellent thing than the power, by means of oratory, to get a hold on assemblies of men, win their good will, direct their inclinations wherever the speaker wishes, or divert them from whatever he wishes. In every free nation, and most of all in communities, which have attained the enjoyment of peace and tranquility, this one art has always flourished above the rest and ever reigned supreme. … Or what achievement [is] so mighty and glorious as that the impulses of the crowd, the consciences of the judges, the austerity of the Senate, should suffer transformation through the eloquence of one man? … What too is so indispensable as to have always in your grasp weapons wherewith you can defend yourself, or challenge the wicked man, or when provoked you can take your revenge? … To come, however, at length to the highest achievements of eloquence, what other power could have been strong enough either to gather scattered humanity into one place, or to lead it out of its brutish existence in the wilderness up to our present condition of civilization as men and as citizens, or, after the establishment of social communities, to give shape to laws, tribunals, and civic rights? … [M]y assertion is this: that the wise control of the complete orator is that which chiefly upholds not only his own dignity, but the safety of countless individuals and of the entire State. Go forward therefore, my young friends, in your present course, and bend your energies to that study which engages you, that so it may be in your power to become a glory to yourselves, a source of service to your friends, and profitable members of the Republic. (Cicero *de Oratore,* 1, VIII; 1967: 23–27)

Quintilian (35–ca. 96 CE), "one of the great imperial pedagogues, and in modern parlance, the first holder of a State professorship in rhetoric" (Salazar, this volume), agreed with Cicero about the role of rhetoric in culture, but with an added emphasis on history:

> I cannot imagine how the founders of cities would have made a homeless multitude come together to form a people, had they not moved them by their skilful speech, or how legislators would have succeeded in restraining mankind in the servitude of the law had they not had the highest gifts of oratory. The very guiding principles of life, however intrinsically honorable they are, nevertheless possess more power to shape men's minds when the brilliance of eloquence illumines the beauty of the subject. And so, although the weapons of eloquence are powerful for good or ill, it is unfair to count as evil something which it is possible to use for good. (Quintilian *Orator's Education,* 2, XVI; 2001: 9–10)

These citations suffice, I think, to remind us of how both Cicero and Quintilian argued that rhetoric, and only rhetoric, had the power to produce and reproduce culture and society. In their view, rhetoric provided the means to create a sense of community, conjured a common history, and articulated the values and sentiments on which *communitas* could be built.

■ ■ ■

Rhetoric, which earlier held the place of prominence among the three arts (*trivium*), lost its position in the Middle Ages, and was reduced to the art of letter writing (Clarke 1968; Murphy 1974). During the Renaissance it was rediscovered, especially in Baroque and Mannerism as the art of expressing feelings, attitudes, and convictions, often involving the mystical, magical, cruel, monstrous, and the erotic (cf. Shearman 1967; Barner 1970: 44ff.).

There are several voices that reach us from this period, as for example, Francis Bacon (1561–1626) who in his *New Organon* argued that just as mechanical power works in nature, rhetorical power works in culture, and, in *The Advancement of Learning,* that "the duty and office of rhetoric is, to apply reason to imagination for the better moving of the will" (2, XVIII, 2; 2001: 149; cf. Cogan 1981).

Perhaps no other voice of that time is as relevant for Rhetoric Culture theory as that of Giambattista Vico (1668–1744). In his *New Science* (1744) Vico proposed the new and bold theory that culture is nothing but a vast and ever extending allegory generated by human poetical imagination, and that human history needs therefore to be understood as a product of fantasy. *La storia ideale eterna* evolves in three stages: Firstly, the age of gods, when nature and the world still speak directly to man, Zeus expresses his anger through

thunder, and human beings in turn speak only onomatopoetically, that is, by imitating sounds of nature. Next comes the heroic age, when humans begin to use verse and to communicate through metaphor. Thirdly follows the prosaic age when man uses a matter-of-fact language including more complex tropes like irony and metonymy, which require reflection. Thus, the former two ages result from creative acts of imitation and imagination, whereas the latter is produced through reflection.

In Vico's view, all cultures run eternally through these three stages, and after a decline at the end of the third stage caused by the "ambiguous human ability of reflection" the process begins anew.

The first stage of culture arises from man's immediate sense experience, his pure feeling, curiosity, wonder, fear, and his capacity to imitate the world around him. Since "in the world's childhood men were by nature sublime poets" (Vico 1976: 29), all cultures must have been "poetic in their beginnings" (Vico 1976: 31). Even in later stages, this is still manifest in fables, myths, in the structures of early languages, and in animistic and polytheistic religions. The worldviews of early societies were thus based on a "poetic metaphysics" that "seeks its proofs not in the external world but within the modifications of the mind of him who meditates it" (Vico 1976: 74).

To provide just one example of how culture is created "poetically," let me quote a passage from the chapter on poetic economy where Vico says:

> Hereupon, by a fine natural and necessary metaphor, they [the humans of the poetic Age] called the ears of grain golden apples, transferring the idea of the apples which are fruits of nature gathered in summer, to the ears of grain which human industry gathers likewise in summer. … And, in other metaphors both beautiful and necessary, they imagined the earth in the aspect of a great dragon, covered with scales and spines (the thorns and briers), bearing wings (for the lands belonged to the heroes), always awake and vigilant (thickly grown in every direction). … Under another aspect they imagined the earth as hydra … which, when any of its heads were cut off, always grew others in their place. It was the three alternating colors: black (the burned-over land), green (the leaf), and gold (the ripe grain). These are the three colors of the serpent's skin, which, when it grows old, is sloughed off for a fresh one. Finally, under the aspect of its fierceness in resisting cultivation, the earth was also imagined as a most powerful beast, the Nemean lion (whence later the name lion was given to the most powerful of the animals), which philologists hold to have been a monstrous serpent. All the beasts vomit forth fire, which is the fire set to the forests by Hercules. (Vico 1961: 146)

Thus, cultural evolution is reflected in language—a storehouse of customs in which the wisdom of successive ages accumulates and becomes the basis for

a *sensus communis.* Vico defined the latter as "judgment without reflection, shared by an entire class, an entire people, and entire nation, or the entire human race" (Vico 1976: 22), and he emphasized that the *sensus communis* lies at the heart of rhetoric: "What is eloquence, in effect, but wisdom, ornately and copiously delivered in words appropriate to the common opinion of mankind?" (Vico 1990: 78).

■ ■ ■

In the nineteenth century, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) tried to extend the notion of rhetoric after enlightenment philosophers had narrowed it. This is what he thought about rhetoric and its relation to language:

> There is obviously no un-rhetorical "naturalness" of language to which one could appeal; language itself is the result of purely rhetorical arts. The power to discover and to make operative that which works and impresses, with respect to each thing, a power which Aristotle calls rhetoric, is, at the same time, the essence of language; the latter is based just as little as rhetoric is upon that which is true, upon the essence of things. Language does not desire to instruct, but to convey to others a subjective impulse and its acceptance. (Nietzsche 1989: 106–107; and 2003: 21)

To this he added:

> But all words in themselves and from the start are, in terms of their meaning, tropes. One cannot speak of a literal meaning that is transferred only in special cases. Just like there is no difference between literal words and tropes, one cannot distinguish between rule guided language and so-called rhetorical figures. What is usually called language is actually all figuration. The tropes are not just occasionally added to words but constitute their most proper nature. It makes no sense to speak of a 'proper meaning' which is carried over to something else only in special cases. (Nietzsche 1989: 23–25)

If language is founded in tropes, this must necessarily affect our understanding of "truth":

> What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, an anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins. (Nietzsche 1954: 46–47)

Just as figurative, undefined, and provisional as language are speaking subjects themselves. Ijsseling, interpreting Nietzsche, has put this as follows: "Man is done; he is also spoken. He is not the subject and not the source, not the center and not the master of his words. All affirmation of man as subject or center is in Nietzsche's eyes a 'metaphysical' or even 'theological claim'" (Ijsseling 1988: 162).

Nietzsche was strongly influenced by Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) (Janaway 1998), whose insights are fundamental for Rhetoric Culture theory. According to him, rhetoric has the power

> … of awakening in others our view of a thing, or our opinion about it, of kindling in them our feeling concerning it, and thus of putting them in sympathy with us. And all this by our conducting the stream of our thought into their minds, through the medium of words, with such force as to carry their thought from the direction it has already taken, and sweep it along with ours in its course. The more their previous course of thought differs from ours, the greater is this achievement. From this it is easily understood how personal conviction and passion make a man eloquent; and in general, eloquence is more the gift of nature than the work of art; yet here, also, art will support nature. (Schopenhauer 1884: 305)

Most important is Schopenhauer's notion of "will" and the role it plays in rhetoric and culture:

> There is nothing more embarrassing in a reasonable argument … than when one makes all effort to persuade somebody in the idea that one deals with his mind and finally discovers that he does not want to understand; that one has to do with his will that discloses itself in face of truth and voluntarily object misunderstandings, chicanery and sophisms barricading himself behind reason and its pretended non-acceptance. Then, of course, one is not able to counter: for reasons and causes applied against the will are like hits of a mirror phantom against a solid body. (Schopenhauer 1884: 412)

Of the scholars who pioneered Rhetoric Culture theory in the twentieth century, I especially like to bring up Kenneth Burke, Hans Blumenberg, and George Kennedy.

Burke (1897–1993) introduced the concept of identification, which refers to the fact that although we are separated from each other as physical beings, we are psychically "con-substantial" and use language and symbols in order to identify with one another. If all of us were incommensurably different, language would be in vain, and if we were all of one mind, we would not need language. Thus, rhetoric, "the use of words by human agents to form attitudes

or to induce actions in other human agents" is rooted "in the essential function of language itself, a function which is wholly realistic, and is continually born anew; the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols" (Burke 1950: 41).

Burke also emphasized the role that rhetoric plays in socialization and thus in the creation of cultural or social rules and behavioral patterns. It is only through rhetoric that the individual acquires social and cultural competence, and only through rhetoric that the individual learns to understand herself or himself, for education is complemented by an auto-persuasive inner process: "If he [the individual] does not somehow act to tell himself (as his own audience) what the various brands of rhetorician have told him, his persuasion is not complete. Only those voices from without are effective which can speak in the language of a voice within" (Burke 1950: 39).

Another major figure who reflected on the actuality of rhetoric in the twentieth century was Hans Blumenberg (1920–1996). Like Burke, he stressed the role of cognition in rhetoric but he added the idea of information deficit. Rhetorical situations, he said, are characterized by a "lack of evidence and the necessity of action" (Blumenberg 1981: 117; transl. Blumenberg 1987). If factual truths were certain and cultural values indisputable people would need no rhetoric, but the contingencies of human life lead to a lack of certainty and evidence. This is why we need rhetoric, for it helps us to "create agreement, accordance, or toleration, upon which the agent relies" (Blumenberg 1981: 108; transl. Blumenberg 1987). This idea goes back, of course, to Aristotle and Quintilian, who stressed the role of *consensus* and held that the basic task of rhetoric was to create, consolidate, and constantly renew—through speech, conversation, use of symbols, and other forms of communicative action—a general common sense that upholds society and culture. But it emphasizes more explicitly the recurrent social necessity of taking decisions concerning the future of the group that have to be discussed beforehand in order to avoid conflicts.

Blumenberg also applied the concept of information deficit to an analysis of social institutions. "Rhetoric creates institutions where there are no evidences" (Blumenberg 1981: 110; transl. Blumenberg 1987), he said, and relieves man from the burden of personal responsibility. Institutions such as councils, courts, or rituals allow people to act even though ultimate certainties are missing: "To understand each other under the aspect of rhetoric means to be aware of the necessity of action as well as of the lack of norms in a finite situation. All that is not coercion here is rhetoric, since rhetoric implies the renunciation of coercion" (Blumenberg 1981: 113; transl. Blumenberg 1987).

Thus Blumenberg's contribution to Rhetoric Culture theory lies particularly in his elucidation of indeterminacy and uncertainty as preconditions of rhetoric. From here it is only a small step to argue, that both rhetoric and

culture share the same indeterminacy and artificiality. As Backman has said. "Rhetoric deals with the artificial structures of reality that in their compound complexities constitute what we call culture" (Backman 1991: 18).

Finally I come to George Kennedy (b. 1928), who deserves special attention for the breakthrough he achieved right at the end of the twentieth century by inaugurating a new "comparative rhetoric." In the past, a global and systematic comparative project, apart from a few marginal precursors like Westermann (1833), had been completely missing in rhetoric, and it was Kennedy who first opened up this perspective. He did this in an unperturbed universalistic fashion, proclaiming that "Though rhetoric is colored by the traditions and conventions of the society in which it is applied, it is also a universal phenomenon which is conditioned by the basic workings of the human mind and heart and by the nature of all human society" (Kennedy 1984: 10).

Most important is Kennedy's attempt to widen the notion of rhetoric by defining it as mental and emotional energy: "Rhetoric, in the most general sense," he said, "is the energy inherent in emotion and thought, transmitted through a system of signs, including language, to others to influence their decisions and actions" (Kennedy 1991: 7). In 1992, he explained the idea of rhetorical energy more fully as "the emotional energy that impels the speaker to speak, the physical energy expanded in the utterance, the energy level coded in the message, and the energy experienced by the recipient in decoding the message" (Kennedy 1995: 106).

Finally, in 1998, he added: "Rhetorical energy in its simplest form is conveyed by volume, pitch, or repetition; more complex forms of rhetorical energy include logical reasons, pathetic narratives, metaphor and other tropes, or lively figures of speech such as apostrophe, rhetorical question, or simile. All communication carries some rhetorical energy; … there is no zero-degree rhetoric" (Kennedy 1998: 215). Kennedy's overall theory (1992) is based on eight theses:

1. Rhetoric is prior to speech, i.e., (a) rhetorical energy is psychologically prior to an utterance and (b) the expression of rhetorical energy manifests itself already in social animals and thus evolutionally long before the development of the faculties for speech in humans;
2. The receiver's interpretation of a communication is prior to the speaker's intent in determining the meaning, i.e., the effects of a speech act are realized through the interpretation of the hearer and not through the intentions of the speaker. In order to cause a desired effect, the speaker must try to anticipate the hearer's interpretation and adapt his way of speaking according to it. Moreover, the intention of the speaker emerges in speech and with the reactions of the hearer;

3. Rhetoric is prior to any belief on the part of a speaker about the meaning of a sign or its effect on others. Humans do not think strategically all the time, i.e., in cause-effect relations but rather also think episodically, i.e., in situational moods;
4. The function of rhetoric is the survival of the fittest. Rhetoric, though, is more an instrument of defense than one of imposition and power;
5. The rhetorical code evolves by selective variation, i.e., rhetorical forms develop in the process of their use. Among the traditional parts of rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery), delivery is prior to the others, i.e., action is prior to reflection;
6. Writing is prior to speech but not prior to rhetoric, i.e., rhetoric is not a result of the invention of writing systems as some scholars claim;
7. Rhetorical invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery are phenomena of nature and prior to speech. Invention corresponds rather to what students of animal communication label as "information," i.e., the development and growth of stimuli in living bodies. Arrangement designates the right (and often ritualized) alignment of the expressed stimuli. Style embraces the different forms stimuli may adopt (e.g., mimicry as a form of analogy). Memory refers to the whole domain of imprinting and learning behavior.

This means that rhetoric is already at work in protozoa, plants, and animals. Kennedy gives an example of the rhetoric of red deer stags:

> A simple example of what I mean by rhetoric in animal communication is provided by the behavior of red deer stags during the rutting season. … [R]ed deer stags compete for the hinds primarily by staging loud vocal encounters. They are, of course, equipped with dangerous antlers and occasionally—perhaps 30% of the time—the encounters end in a physical fight if both stags stand their ground. More often, one is "persuaded" to retreat, leaving his opponent free to mate with the females. The encounter takes the form of a contest in which each stag tries to out-roar the other; the options offered are "flight or fight," and the one who roars loudest and longest often wins. If the challenger fails to retreat, this may be followed by parallel strutting at right angles a few meters apart, and only if that is not persuasive by a fight. The performance resembles confrontation between hostile states: a series of ultimata, deployment of weapons, war as a last resort. The rhetoric of the stags is a display of raw and psychological energy conveyed by the simplest possible techniques and thus illustrates my contention that rhetoric, in essence, can be viewed as a form of energy that results from reaction to a situation and is transmitted by a code. Though costly in energy, since it can go on as much as

> an hour, it is less costly and less dangerous than an actual fight. From this and from similar evidence it seems clear that nature has encouraged the evolution of rhetorical communication as a substitute for physical encounters. The rhetorical energy a stag can exhibit is directly proportional to his physical strength and potential as the best mate for a female. This is tested by debate. The evolutionary function of the display is to determine who is the fittest to survive and transmit his genes to future generations of the species. The social function is to secure authority, territory, and mating rights. (Kennedy 1998: 13–14)

In *homo sapiens* this kind of energetic animal rhetoric continues, and rhetorical energy is present in the utterances of all social animals, including humans of all cultural backgrounds. Rhetoric and culture are in fact tightly connected, for rhetoric as an expression of the will and energy of living beings, invokes and recreates people's specific ways of being. In *homo sapiens*, biological determinants leave more and more room to cultural influences that are nevertheless ultimately grounded in biological universals.

■ ■ ■

By way of conclusion I would like to draw attention to two outstanding examples of an early ethnography of rhetoric. Both foreshadow—if not exceed—the present-day ethnography of speaking mentioned in the introduction to this volume in that they demonstrate the crucial role that rhetoric plays in the creation of culture. The first to mention is Joseph-François Lafitau's (1681–1746) *Mœurs des Sauvages américains comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps* (Paris: Saugrain l'aîné; C.E. Hochereau 1724), a book that combines deep knowledge of and admiration for both Iroquois and ancient Greek and Roman culture. In order to bring across Lafitau's admirable style and ethnographic insight, I should like to quote him right away at length:

> The chiefs know how to gain ascendancy over their (people's) minds and take advantage of their facility in speaking and saying all that they wish. But it is principally in the public councils and solemn transactions that the orators appear brilliant. They alone speak in them, their duty properly consisting in announcing all the business, which has been discussed in the secret councils, in declaring the results of all deliberations and in bearing the news authoritatively in the name of the entire village and nation. This role is not easy to sustain. It demands a great capacity, the knowledge of councils, a complete knowledge of all their ancestors' ways, wit, experience and eloquence. Not considered at all in the qualifications is whether they are of a ranking maternal household; their personal merits and talents are the only things considered. It is rare to find persons who fill this post worthily. Scarcely one

> or two in a village fulfil it even passably. Recourse must often be had to the people of other villages and nothing is neglected to attract outsiders capable of carrying on this work well who have gained some reputation in it. These orators' discourses do not consist of long harangues, composed on the model of those of Demosthenes or Cicero. The Iroquois, like the Lacedaemonians wish a quick and concise discourse. Their style is, however, full of figures of speech and quite metaphorical; it is varied according to the different nature of the business. On certain occasions, it gets away from ordinary language and resembles our courtly style; on others, it is sustained by a keener action than that of our actors on the stage. They have, withal, a capacity for mimicry; they speak with gestures as much as with the voice and act out things so naturally as to make them seem to take place under their audience's eyes. The orator has, near him, one or two persons to remind him of what he is to say, to refresh his memory on what decisions have been reached and to watch that he says things in the proper order. This is done, however, with courtesy and without interruptions. But he himself, during his discourse, is careful to ask the assembly, from time to time, if he has announced things well, in the way in which they should be heard and have been decided. Several of the Council respond to him by an echo of approbation. He takes advantage also of pauses to consult his assistants. After his report follows the nio-hen, the general cry of consent. It is done in this way. One of the Old Men cries, "nio-hen?" All the others answer "nio." This is done three times in each clan's name. That is the kind of formula to ask whether everyone is satisfied but it is really done only as a form, for everyone always answers "yes." It seems, however, set up in such a way as to give opportunity to those who would judge it a proper time to make remonstrance or protest. … When the orators have wit and *savoir faire* they gain a great deal of credit and authority. The famous Garakontiel who has served religion and the French Colony so well was only an orator at Onnontague [Onondaga]: and this man was so much respected by his people that he managed the Five Iroquois nations as he wished (Lafitau 1974: 297–299).

Lafitau emphasized that orators were selected according to their skills and not according to descent. Sometimes they were so few candidates in a village that the Iroquois had to request them from neighboring villages. Occasionally the orators gained the highest political influence, which Lafitau compared to that of Nancrates, a demagogue who incited the Lycians to offer fruitless resistance to the Roman army under M. Brutus. The form of public speech of the Iroquois is described as short and lively, figurative and metaphorical, sometimes highly formalized and always accompanied by vivid mimicry and gestures. Lafitau also commented on Iroquois forms of argumentation:

> Each of the opposing sides first takes up the proposition in a few words and sets forth all the reasons which have been alleged pro and con by those who first expressed their opinion. He then states his own opinion and concludes with these words: "That is my thought on the subject of this, our Council." To this, all the members of the assembly answer hoo or etho, that is to say "that is good" whether he has spoken well or badly" (Lafitau 1974: 296).

Lafitau also gave some examples of councils receiving ambassadors, replying to them, declaring (chanting) war, mourning for the dead (Condolence Council), holding festivals, etc.:

> The Senate has, certainly, none of the august majesty of that of the Roman Republic [in the days] immediately before [the time of] the Caesars but I believe that it is not at all inferior to that of Rome herself when she went to take the plough from the Serrans and Cincinnati to make them consuls and dictators. They are a troupe of dirty men seated on their backsides, hunched up like monkeys, with their knees up to their ears, or lying in different positions, either flat on their backs or with their stomachs in the air, who, all of them, pipes in their mouths, treat affairs of state with as much coolness and gravity as the Junta of Spain or the Council of the Sages [Council of the Ten] at Venice (Lafitau 1974: 296).

Participation at the Iroquoian councils was restricted: "Almost no one except the Ancients is present at these councils and has a deliberative voice in them. The chiefs and Agoïanders [here: Assistants] would be ashamed to open their mouths in them, if they did not have, joined to their dignity, the advantages of age" (Lafitau 1974: 296).

A second outstanding early ethnographer of rhetoric culture is Maurice Leenhardt (1878–1954)—like Lafitau a missionary—who lived among the New Caledonians for twenty-five years (1902–1927). In *Do Kamo: La personne et le mythe dans le monde mélanésien* (1947), Leenhardt has explained how speech among the New Caledonians is called *no*, a term that designates not only verbal speech but all forms of rhetorical action. The concept encompasses thinking, speaking, and social action: "The word does not imply discourse but is simultaneously spontaneous act and considered act, activity and psychic behavior, through which each being reveals or affirms himself" (Leenhardt 1979: 140).

The central role of rhetoric in the creation of culture is brought out clearly in passages like the following:

> The word proceeds from the heart, for the heart is called "the basket of words." Everything belonging to man is *ewekë* [the Lifouan equivalent of *no*]: his eloquence, the object he shapes, what he creates, what he possesses of his

> own, the products of his labor, his remarks, his goods, his garden, his wife, his psychic wealth, and his sex organ. All this is word (Leenhardt 1979: 133).

Thus, the social person and all authority are created by means of speech. Part of chiefly dignity is rhetorical competence as manifested in his speeches and in his actions, for social relations are created, intensified, and renewed through gift exchange and are part of a man's speech:

> The chief presides over the circulation of gifts. Each exchange between clans takes on worth only by the definition the eldest son [chief] gives it. His word situates the act and puts it into time. The act itself is not in the exchange but in the word it calls forth. The act is a word. On each occasion it is for the chief to pronounce the appropriate ritual words, as well as the discourse which makes the act stand out and gives it meaning (Leenhardt 1979: 114).

Speech for the New-Caledonians, says Leenhardt, is the "manifestation of the being" (1979: 133), and "the word is the being's essential power of manifestation" (1979: 140)—and thus it is human culture. What Assmann (1992) has called "cultural memory" is for the New Caledonians likewise *no:* "Tradition, marriage, fame, or myth are all thoughts as well as acts of the ancestors or gods. They are the 'enduring word'" (Leenhardt 1979: 135).

The rhetorical notion of human society and culture inherent in the New Caledonian concept of *no* is also expressed in visual arts. Ancestors of chiefs are always represented with exaggerated mouths and big tongues sticking out. Leenhardt asks rhetorically: "Isn't the tongue the muscle which brings forth the traditional virtues, virile decisions, and all manifestations of life the word contains in itself?" (1979: 139). Speech, then, is the regime of life. "Evil words" or "twisted words" harm the equilibrium of the group. "Straight words," in contrast, maintain the integrity of social life, create and demonstrate vitality: "Caledonian chieftainship, whose authority rests entirely on the prestige of the word, strangely confirms these observations. The chief has the task of recalling in richly embellished discourse all the traditions, alliances, and memorable moments of the clan, all its engagements, all its honour" (Leenhardt 1979: 136).

Being convinced that man and his character are manifest in speech, the New Caledonians have created a number of epithets for *no.* They speak of wise, deeply dangerous, straight-line, right-handed, twisted, misleading, appropriate, adequate, equal, free words and words without backing in order to characterize individuals:

> The word is qualitative because the being, through it, is manifested only by its qualities, or, as there are no 'qualities' in the native language, we might better say by its states. The word manifests being in its diverse attributes. 'Wise,' 'straight,' 'right' and so forth, as attributes of the word mean that a being was

> at a given moment in a state of wisdom, justice, rectitude, and so forth. The word fixes and consolidates these qualities or states by giving them form and objectifying them. The criterion of its quality is to be consistent with the being, that is, it should help the Canaque make real what he feels, contemplates, and undertakes at random. In this way, the word is creative (Leenhardt 1979: 149).

■ ■ ■

In the preceding pages I have ignored those rhetoricians and philosophers who defended the rather narrow conception of rhetoric that considers it a technique of manipulation and lies, or at best an art of ornamented oration, address, and harangue. Instead, I have focused on scholars who held a much broader notion of rhetoric that paved the way to present-day rhetorical theory.

Very early attempts at relating rhetoric and culture are found in the work of ancient Greek and Roman rhetoricians who claimed that civilization could only have emerged through the rhetorical power of founding fathers. For them, particular cultural traditions were a result of people's attempts to persuade each other of the validity of specific world-views and specific ways of life in order to regulate conflicts, justify social hierarchies, and create social harmony.

Later, in response to Descartes, Vico emphasized the role of imagination and rhetorical figuration in the creation of culture, a view that was taken up in modern times and modified by scholars such as Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Burke, Blumenberg, and Kennedy, who drew attention to the fact that the driving force of culture is not so much reason but human will energized by historical contingency.

Interesting intimations of a rhetorical theory of culture can also be found in the work of ethnographers such as Lafitau and Leenhardt who learned from people in other parts of the world (Iroquois and the New Caledonians) that social life is grounded in discourse, and that without speech there would be no culture.

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CHAPTER 3

Homo Rhetoricus

Peter L. Oesterreich

The last decades of the twentieth century witnessed a "renaissance of rhetoric" (cf. Plett 1994), or "rhetorical turn" (Simons, ed. 1990), that has affected not only literary studies but also law, theology, aesthetics, philosophy, economics, politics, and even the natural sciences. The idea that cultures are rhetorically constituted is, of course, not new, and there have been various earlier attempts to address the subject—for example, Plato, Nietzsche, Burke, Heidegger, Gadamer, and others. But I think that there still is much to gain by rethinking this time-honored topic, and in this paper I will explore the possibility of a more comprehensive rhetorical theory of culture that characterizes our species as *homo rhetoricus.*[1]

Humans are rhetorical beings who use persuasive speech not only to influence others but also to shape themselves. This manifests itself in acts of prophesizing, narrating, proclaiming, questioning, explicating, contradicting, and everything that belongs to the domain of teaching (*docere*), as well as in pleading, requesting, advising, impelling, prescribing, ordering, seducing—that is, forms of expression that belong to emotion (*movere*)—and, finally, delighting, amusing, diverting, praising, paying tribute, glorifying, and so on, which pertain to pleasing (*delectare*). This interaction of *docere, movere,* and *delectare* shapes the life of homo rhetoricus.

As Aristotle pointed out in the first chapter of his *Rhetoric,* most humans are naturally able to check or support speech argumentatively, defend themselves or accuse others (cf. Aristotle *Rhetoric*). The faculty of speech, as well as of listening and comprehending, can therefore develop fully "even without

conscious application of rules of art" (Gadamer 1977: 152). Hence rhetoric as *ars rhetorica* (cf. Quintilianus *Institutio oratoria,* II.17,7) merely constitutes a methodical, conscious use of the propensity for persuasive speech (*oratio ante artem*) that pervades everyday life. But the universality of rhetoric does not imply that every human being is a well-versed orator.[2] On the contrary, people vary in their ability to express themselves and understand others, and it is precisely this difference in perceptual and communicative competence that motivates and gives life to rhetoric.

Although the object of fundamental rhetoric is not so much the "art" of rhetoric but spontaneous speaking as it occurs in everyday practice, the categories of classical rhetoric still possess a heuristic value and can serve as a guideline for analysis. Nietzsche hinted at this possibility when he said that rhetoric is not just an arbitrary cultural surface phenomenon but permeates the entirety of human communication. In his view, rhetoric as art develops merely as a conscious appropriation of the subconscious rhetoric that is situated in language itself. "There is no non-rhetorical 'nature' of language that one could appeal to," he writes, for, "language itself is the result of numerous rhetorical arts" (Nietzsche 1920–29, Vol. 5: 298).[3]

The five great rhetorical arts (*quinque artes*) form a heuristic key for the fundamental-rhetorical notion of mind. They refer to the powers to invent, put things in order, design, remember, and perform, which, being primary creative forces, shape man's cultural sphere of living. They form the creative "spirit" of man that produces in a more or less reflective manner the symbolic realms of human language, fine arts, religion, mythology, and history. The fundamental-rhetorical reformulation of the notion of "mind" allows the analogous application of rhetorical categories to nonverbal areas of human culture, and, at the same time, breaks away from the transcendental logic of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century philosophy, which also influenced Ernst Cassirer's *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen* in the twentieth century (cf. Cassirer 1953, vol. 1: 1–47).

For an understanding of the fundamental role of rhetoric in culture, the terms *topical worldview, situational field,* and *basic forces* are especially important. In what follows I will elucidate each of these terms.

■ ■ ■

As indicated by studies in the sociology of knowledge, socially conditioned images and linguistic categorization provide a *reservoir* that both enables and constrains human perception, action and communication (Schütz, Luckmann 1979: 283). This question of cultural context and background was also addressed by classical rhetoric, which used the concept of *topos* to refer to the linguistically constituted conventions and convictions that underlie all

concrete cultural communication. The art of finding adequate arguments (*ars inveniendi*) relied on places (*loci communes*) of common understanding (*sensus communis*), and in one way or another this "art" applies to all modalities of fundamental rhetoric.

Relying on interpretations of Cicero and Aristotle, L. Bornscheuer has worked out a general scheme that deals with this issue (1976). A topical worldview, he says, is charcterized by a collective-habitual preconditioning (habitualness), polyvalent interpretability (potentiality), problem-specific power of argumentation (intentionality), and group-specific memory (symbolicity) (Bornscheuer 1976: 105). This topical understanding of the world differs from metaphysics and science, for *topoi* are subject to time, and are bound in their validity to particular places. Thus they are "mortal."

Furthermore, *topoi* possess a special aesthetic quality. They are products of culture-specific imaginary power that draws on (and also creates) moral exemplars, metaphors, and mythical or religious narratives. It is this imaginative, sensual side that gives cultural images of the world their meaningfulness and "magical" power of fascination (Bornscheuer 1976: 103).

Topical understanding as a free assignation of meaning thrives on polyvalent interpretability (potentiality) (Bornscheuer 1976: 105), and relative indefiniteness is a virtue of *topoi,* for a measure of semantic polyvalence opens up the interpretative scope of thinking. A culture-specific understanding of the world comes about as the result not so much of logical but of topical construction, and here the secret of cultural uniqueness is to be sought in the combinatory synthesis of particular *topoi* that in their totality constitute the *topical world view.*

Concrete situational fields need to be understood as part of historically and culturally specific contexts that motivate speech events and involve five procedures outlined by classical rhetoric: firstly, the methodical-topical finding of thoughts (*inventio*); secondly, argumentative ordering (*dispositio*); thirdly, persuasion through the use of tropes and figures (*elocutio*); fourthly, mnemonic devices (*memoria*); and finally, effective performance (*action*).

From a fundamental-rhetorical point of view, it is telling that Quintilianus reported that in their everyday discourse even "uneducated barbarians" produced rhetorical forms similar to introduction, narrative, request, proof, epilogue, and the like (Quintillianus II. 17.6). None of them was a trained orator, but nevertheless each of them was a *homo rhetoricus.*

This is to say, an understanding of the world—including one's own personal identity—is essentially the result of rhetorical construal. Belonging to particular social and cultural fields, persons act for and against others within the context of competing worldviews and interpretations of meaning, which they try to assert through persuasive speech.

Inventio is the conscious-methodical finding of topical aspects for a singular occasion of speaking. A minimal topical catalogue is contained in the frequently quoted mnemonic verse, *quis? quid? ubi? quibus auxiliis? cur? quomodo? quando?* (who? what? where? with whose help? why? in what manner? when?).

One fundamental *inventio* that is of central interest here concerns the culture specific invention of one's own self or the communal we-self. It is just this invention of the societal self that is not absolutely free as a contrast to the term of autarkic or autonomous subjectivity, and, different from the sketch of the "particularly own self" of classical existentialism, it is not radically individualistic. The personality situated in the sphere of living has to prove its view of the self and the world, its convictions and decisions, in a rhetorical struggle with competing interpretations. From the outset, the designs of *homo rhetoricus* refer not to the subjective inner space of self-consciousness but to the intersubjective sphere of culture and society.

The rhetorical field, in which the five rhetorical powers take effect, is created by ten situational circumstances (*peristases*) that at the same time open up and limit the room for rhetorical process. Five *peristases* refer to local circumstances: 1) the locality, 2) the temporal circumstances or temporality, 3) the subject to be negotiated or negotiability, 4) the means of expression or media, and 5) the orientation toward a goal or finality. As I will elaborate below, five further aspects constitute personal *topoi.* They include 6) the oratorical party, 7) the client's party, 8) the oppositional party, 9) the allied party, and 10) the decisive party.

Oratorical party: The most active role played in a situational field is, of course, that of the speaker. As orators, people shape the reality in which they live, and this includes the entirety of their personality (*ethos*). With, against, and in front of others, they promote the action-guiding convictions they represent. They also point toward possible solutions of issues that have become problematic and open—or keep open—options that may be relevant for themselves and others. This challenge of orators as shapers of mutual forms of living enriches their persuasive personal effect and culminates in their personal authority.[4]

Client's party: This role is marked by an inability to speak. The client's party needs the orator who defends its particular interests in existentially significant or even dangerous situations. The dependence and need of the client has great impact on the orator's self-understanding and demands appropriate support of the client as well as circumspect and disciplined speaking.

Oppositional party: Among the constitutive conditions of a situational field is also the ability of arguing *against* an adversary. This is personified in the oppositional party who tries to obstruct, limit, or entirely prevent the orator's

rhetorical actions. Its power to create contradiction or paradox does not necessarily possess a hostile or even diabolical character, and the opponent is, as a rule, not evil but represents the possibility of ambivalent and different interpretations of issues. Nevertheless, rhetorical situations always tend to develop an agonistic element, leading to perturbation that prevents a rhetorically "idle existence."

Allied party: This is the group of persons who from the outset share the orator's interest. They form a community of conviction that is directed against the oppositional party. The allied ability of being "with" thus assumes a counterpoint against the oppositional ability of being "against." The allied "we" enrich the orator by their knowledge and lead him toward an argumentation that will meet consensus.

Decisive party: In fair rhetorical situations where people can decide freely and according to arguments proposed in the orator's speech and the oppositional party's objection, the power of decision is closely linked to the ability to listen. The decisive party is the addressee of all speeches, and it is this "in front of" that ultimately motivates the performance of the orators.

As a whole, the five *topoi* that I have identified here form fundamental personal modes of action, but they do not produce real societal roles. Rather, they enable and constrain the permanent shaping of self and other. This becomes clear if one considers the possibility that the same person can embody various personal *topoi:* Someone who defends himself in court and hence speaks for himself realizes in his individual person both the oratorical as well as the client's *topos*. On the other side, someone who is only able to embody the *topos* of client remains dependent and has to rely on the guardianship of others, and if anyone is *a fortiori* denied access to the realization of one or more personal *topoi,* he or she is denied public existence.

The rhetorical sub-art of *dispositio* refers to the appropriate ordering of elements found in the *inventio* of a complete speech. According to the natural order (*ordo naturalis*), the opening of a speech (*exordium*) should be followed by narration (*narratio*), then argumentation (*argumentatio*) with confutation (*confutatio*) and refutation (*refutatio*), and finally the recapitulation and affectively colored ending of the speech (*peroratio*). The accomplishment of such a disposition encompasses the inwardly and outwardly adequate perspicuity (*perspicuitas*) of any particular piece of oration.

The "wild" rhetoric of the realm of everyday life, which is not limited to the standard situations of classical judicial, counseling, and praise speeches, does not, however, conform to such dispositional forms of speech art. Its inartificial forms are the result not of conscious, long-term planning but of an intuitive sense of situational suitability and appropriateness. In the light of classical rhetoric, everyday-life rhetoric may appear *ad hoc,* haphazard, and

incomplete; but if one looks closely, one also finds an ability to order and put forward arguments, to generate narratives, use enthymematic confutation, magnifications and minimizations, and to pronounce ethical value judgments. In short to produce everything that makes up the symbolical order we call "culture."

The art of elocution, with its figures such as metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy, and irony, is traditionally deemed the inherent field of rhetoric (Plett 1975: 18). But the use of tropes is certainly not a privilege of rhetoric as art. Quintilianus has suggested that the most frequent and by far most beautiful trope—metaphor—takes a prominent position also in relatively natural speech. There it has a refreshing and shining effect (Quintilianus VIII. 6,4). It possesses a vitalizing and insight-promoting effect both in everyday as well as in art-rhetorical contexts of speaking. Yet, for the untrained the usage of metaphor remains unconscious.

This is supported by the modern view that metaphor pervades everyday language and thought, and that it plays an important part in the forming of cultural identity. It is, for example, significant whether processes of argumentation are depicted metaphorically as "fight" or as "game" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

Metaphor belongs—as Giambattista Vico has shown—to the order of "poetic logic." Metaphor endows natural bodies with senses and passions and is thus able to personify elemental natural phenomena (thunder and lightning) and turn them into divine beings (Zeus). "In this manner every metaphor turns into a little myth" (Vico 1981: 69). Also our modern world views could be seen as products of deductive as well as imaginative logic. Even philosophical texts as a rule cannot do without a guiding—e.g., organic or mechanical—"background of metaphorical imagery" (Blumenberg 1983: 290ff.). An even more elemental metaphoric structure consists in the fact that the vocabulary of everyday language is fed largely by so-called "faded" or "naturalized" metaphors, which are not recognized as such. Finally, the nature of language itself seems to possess a metaphorical character. According to Fichte, the true mutual meeting point of sense and spirit is found in language where a permanent transmission takes place, "… a transmission and retransmission of the sensual into the mental, and of the mental into the sensual" (Fichte 1971, Vol. VII: 326).

This unconscious art of metaphorical speech is a part of the fundamental ability to design, which refers to the aforementioned three levels of persuasion: instructing (*docere*), delighting (*delectare*), and emotionally moving (*movere*). Metaphor, according to Aristotle, permits the "recognition of the similar" (*Poetics,* 1459). Through relationships of similarity (*similitudines*), metaphor's imaginative logic allows hidden correspondences (e.g., animate and inanimate) to become visible. Secondly, metaphor has such a "refreshing"

and "delighting" effect because it visualizes the analogous relationships of being in often surprising ways. Because of its energetic nature, it can present the *analogia entis* immediately "in front of the eye." Its imaginary evidence unfolds a *pathos*-effective energetic force (Aristotle *Rhetoric,* 1411). Here, the moving images (*imagines agents*) of metaphors have the greatest energy and vitality.

Through the *evidentia*-principle, the design of a speech can furthermore present things to the mind's eye, as it were, and turn the listener into a spectator. This logic of imagination is already effective in everyday life where it abounds, and where, for example, a plastic shaping of speech simultaneously allows a successful shaping of personal identity.

The art of *memoria* consists of artificial mnemonic devices (*memoria artificialis*) that lead to a "treasure-vault of eloquence" (*thesaurus eloquentiae*) (Quintilianus XI.2,1) that is composed of varied places of memory (*loci*) with remarkable images that are easy to memorize (*imagines*). The rhetoric of everyday life, in contrast, rests on memory that does not necessitate any special mnemonic training. Nevertheless, it can keep present imaginative and intelligible realities, without the support of immediate sensual perception. This fundamental remembering is the basis for any constitution of signs and symbols, and thus for human culture in general. It allows, in the course of speaking and listening, a holding present of that which has already been said and permits one to perceive the totality of a discourse as it unfolds.

"Demosthenes was once asked, which was the first and most important requirement of eloquence. He replied, according to the testimony of Cicero and Quintilian, that it was the competence of good *performance* (action). To the question which was the second main part of rhetoric he again answered that it was performance, and to the question about the third he gave the same answer" (Müller 1983: 78). This proves the significance attributed to the art of *actio* right from the beginning of rhetorical theory and practice.

Quintilianus writes in connection with the Demosthenes anecdote, "Yes, I would like to claim that even a mediocre speech, which recommends itself through the electrifying power of performance, will leave a greater impression than the best one, which lacks this recommendation" (Quintilianus XI.3,5). The *actio* in fact decides a speech, and good performance provides "something quite astounding of power and might" (Quintilianus XI.3,2). There is, then, no evidence so strong that it need not be supported by the speaker's personal effort. The emotional effects would, however, also turn dull if they were not supported by a competent use nonverbal "eloquence" such as gesture and bodily movement. Classical rhetoric's art of performance therefore consisted of the systematic training of the voice (*vox*), the play of features (*vultus*), the manual gestures (*gestus*), and body posture (*habitus corporis*) (Quintilianus XI.3,14ff).

In the unspectacular domain of everyday life, the Cartesian dichotomy of *res cogitans* and *res extensa* is, however, not applicable, and in public meeting places, corporeal-symbolic articulation is as a rule not trained, whereas emotions, as Quintilianus observed, have the tendency to objectify themselves bodily and erupt naturally. Furthermore, persons design their situational roles intuitively and adapt their *actio* to the circumstance of the speech situation, reacting spontaneously to any alteration that may occur during a speech.

The rhetorical power of inventing, ordering, designing, and remembering aims at attaining goals that are part of the actual trial and reality of social life. This emphasis on the constitutive role of rhetoric does not, however, signify a return to the "art-rhetorical" image of the always masterful and victorious orator. Especially in rhetorical situations where persons act bodily and personally with, for, in front of, and against each other, there is as a rule no absolute dominance of any one party. The encounter of free agents unknown to each other presupposes the ability to be and sustain personal and cultural difference, at which point the sovereign rule of the subject will ends, and in the face of alien others, previously formed convictions and plans can fail at any time.

Adam Müller has compared this incalculableness of the effect of one's own speech act to the situation of a young girl who enters an evening party dressed in unsuitable clothes: "The courage, the confidence, the idea of an impression, of the particular effect that she would have, the whole ideal structure of lonesome self-confidence vanishes in front of the entirely unexpected, completely uncalculated reality" (Müller 1983: 79). This aspect of being potentially different, and of incalculable and unexpected contingencies, has affected *homo rhetoricus* throughout history and remains a constant challenge and trial for all his or her speaking and living.

To conclude this section, with the topical worldview, the ten *peristases* of the situational field, and the five great rhetorical powers, there are some basic terms that can help articulate a rhetorical theory of culture, at least as a provisional sketch.

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We can not only talk "in" but also "about" speech—about its modalities, properties, possibilities, and, as Stephen Tyler (1987) would say, the "unspeakable." As in the present text, one can raise the phenomenon of the rhetorical to become itself the subject. This possibility of rhetorical reflection was, however, not realized and developed to the same degree in all cultures.

A purely naïve culture that has not in any way reflected on its own ways of speaking is probably merely a mental construct. Nevertheless, one can differentiate between a great number of different manners and levels of rhetorical reflexivity in cultural history. Be that as it may, the Rhetoric Culture project—

and with it the idea of a fundamental rhetoric—derives without doubt from a modern/postmodern, highly reflexive attitude that grew out of the rhetorical meta-criticism of the twentieth century.

The basic trope of this modernity now is irony. As early as in Vico's tropological interpretation of history, irony has provided the signature of modernity, which, in contrast to the naïve poetry of ancient mythology, mirrors "times of reflection" (Vico 1981: 72). In opposition to mythic, identity-creating tropes like metaphor, synecdoche, and metonymy, irony stands for difference and alterity.

Historically, irony first reached its high point with the Romanticism of the nineteenth century and was directed against the myth of reason produced by the Enlightenment. Later, it expanded in Schlegel's work into an existential (*ironia vitae*), and in Schelling's philosophy into an ontological (*ironia entis*) figure (cf. Oesterreich 2001: 404–406). The longing for infinite irony has asserted itself against all counter-reactions and found another climax in the pluralism of "postmodernism" at the end of the twentieth century.

Ironical alterity, and with it the human ability to see, interpret, and believe in different ways and styles of life, also inspires the theory of fundamental-rhetoric. Rhetoric Culture theory itself represents in the twenty-first century a new positive opportunity for *homo rhetoricus.*

After the twentieth century media-led globalization, the task of promoting a process of transcultural understanding is an outstanding issue for the twenty-first century. This is even more important since the presence of diverse cultures, whose opposing worldviews are rooted in different traditions, may be a source of future social unrest. In this situation the rhetorical paradigm, which stands against all dogmatisms, could offer one way of avoiding future conflicts.

Notes

1. Cf. Oesterreich 1990. About the universal extension of fundamental rhetoric see, among others, Oesterreich 1996 (86–104) and 2000 (353–372).
2. The term *homo rhetoricus* as used by R.A. Lanham is oriented toward the artificially trained orator (see Lanham 1976: 2ff.) and is too narrow. Lanham is one-sidedly oriented toward the European tradition of the art of speaking (*ars rhetorica*), and neglects the universal, inartificial phenomenon of the rhetorical that possesses a cultural ubiquity not as art but as capacity within the sphere of living.
3. All translations from German in this chapter are mine.
4. Very recently, J. Knape and F.-H. Robling have developed an orator-centered theory of rhetoric that emphasizes the personal *peristatic topos* of the orator following the school-rhetorical tradition (see Knape 2000, here especially: 33–45, and Robling 2000: 371–82).

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CHAPTER 4

Listening Culture

Daniel M. Gross

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Cultural history is a kind of anthropology of the past insofar as it shares a rhetoric of distance. As competent researchers of those others with whom we are ultimately consubstantial, we first must carve out our field of study aesthetically, rendering certain subsets suitable representatives of the whole by way of *synecdoche*—showing, for instance, how detailed analysis of obscure seventeenth-century British texts on the art of listening to sermons will tell us something crucial about a broader field invoked in a title "Listening Culture," and hence something crucial about ourselves. Likewise, we must mobilize figures such as personification to tell our story of a listening culture born with Christian characteristics and vanquished by the modern cult of agency, where it waits to be revitalized, resuscitated, reborn. As competent researchers, we must at the same time consider our motivating *pathos* for carving up the world this way and not that. How might the anxiety of influence characterized by productive misreading (*clinamen*), compulsive repetition (*kenosis*), and *apophrades*—or the return of the dead—shape our material (Bloom 1973)? Or, in the spirit of Foucault and the masters of German historicism, how do sympathies and antipathies shape our project of study (see my article "Foucault's Analogies" 2001: 57–82)? Which cultural investments and linguistic means, for instance, distance the ears of the parishioner at Blackfriars circa 1610, and which draw them closer? What specific silences does this inquiry impose?

The Rhetoric Culture project encourages such considerations in anthropology and cultural history, at the same time that it encourages rhetoricians to consider their own, often suppressed, anthropology. After all, aren't rhetorical

habits of language and emotion understood as instantiations of specialized cultures first, not universal grammars or biological imperatives? In what follows, I suggest that rhetoricians and other communication theorists might benefit from anthropological models—notably Ivo Strecker's "genius loci"—that help us grasp how invention exceeds the measured constraints of structure or tradition. Emerging from the anthropology of non-Western cultures, this model in turn can help us decipher Western traditions of communication mystified when cultural specifics are hastily projected into general theories. In this case, I will draw from cultural anthropology to explain how speaking and listening in the West are bound up in ancient mythologies of gender that make it difficult to characterize what I call "the public ear" or the accompanying virtues of passive listening. Rhetoric Culture theory, in other words, can be used as a critical tool in the present.

To sharpen this critical tool, however, cultural anthropology might in turn adopt the rigorous skepticism built into the Western rhetorical tradition—notably in Hans Blumenberg's 1971 essay "Anthropologische Annäherung an die Aktualität der Rhetorik"—which point us toward the latent histories that destabilize manifest cultural formations, and toward the concrete possibilities for invention that exceed observable behavior. In order to draw out the distinctive contribution of Blumenberg's work I begin this essay in Germany, where *rhetorische Anthropologie* has a rich tradition currently regaining currency among rhetoric scholars working in the shadow of philosophy. Then I take up "listening culture" as a test case for the larger project outlined in this volume, exploring the ways in which rhetoric culture implicates the art of listening as a threatening precondition for the art speaking.

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Recent *rhetorische Anthropologie* built on the model of philosophical anthropology faces an inherent dilemma: what one hand wishes to deliver *homo rhetoricus* in terms of universal capacities, the other hand snatches away.[1] In fact, this tension shapes three recent essay collections that share roots in the Seminar für Allgemeine Rhetorik in Tübingen, Germany, and which in combination mark what editor Josef Kopperschmidt considers the real reason for current interest in rhetoric, namely, its anthropology (Kopperschmidt, ed. 2000: 13), and especially its sophisticated treatments of "the whole man" constituted in a culturally situated language and in the interanimation of body and mind (a long-standing strength of German scholarship and popular culture, I should add). After ambitiously titling his collection *Rhetorische Anthropologie: Studien zum Homo rhetoricus,* for instance, Kopperschmidt backpedals from the project's apparent "ontological ambitions" (2000: 22–23). Although, Kopperschmidt protests, the "homo"-formula such as "homo-faber" and "homo-

ludens" might imply claims about mankind's essential nature, it doesn't have to. We should simply consider *homo rhetoricus* one useful heuristic for characterizing humankind from a particular, and in this case rhetorical, perspective (Kopperschmidt, ed. 2000: 22). Metzger and Rapp rightly insist that the rhetorically informed *homo inveniens* is a modern creature distinguished by a focus on the new and the creative (Metzger and Rapp, eds. 2003: 7–9), but they also must struggle against their essentializing rubric, as well as the contribution of someone like Peter L. Oesterreich, who flatly argues that man is a rhetorical being ideally subject to a universal, rhetorical anthropology (Kopperschmidt, ed. 2000: 355).

Then the eclectic Volume 23 of *Rhetorik: Ein internationales Jahrbuch* collected by Peter D. Krause (2004) under the rubric "Rhetorik und Anthropologie" introduces questions of appropriate scope. Is "the rhetoric of *x*" formula found in Matthias Bohlender's "Von der Rhetorik des Vertrages zur Rhetorik des Tauschs: Zur Anthropologie der 'Marktgesellschaft'" and Ursula Kocher's "Lügen brauchen gute Redner: Überlegungen zu einer Rhetorik der Lüge" enough to mark the project as an appropriate contribution to *rhetorische Anthropologie*? After all, what sort of communication doesn't have a "rhetoric" so conceived? And what about Ralf Simon's "Handlungstheorie des Lyrischen," or for that matter Renate Lachmann's essay on "Phantasia, imaginatio und rhetorische Tradition" (Kopperschmidt, ed. 2000: 245–270), or Karl Mertens "Der Kairos der Rede als Ausdruck menschlicher Situiertheit" (295–313)? Might rhetoricians dodge the pitfalls of "mere rhetoric" and expand the reach of their work—whether stylistic, argumentative, or historical—by simply hanging on it the meta-label "anthropology"? We should consider how this latest effort to substantiate rhetoric continues the series traced by Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar: Perelman and Valesio would have rhetoric become its traditional counterpart dialectic; Grassi would recast rhetoric as the seat of primordial poetic utterance and thus as the ground of philosophy; followers of Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud would equate rhetoric with a hermeneutics of suspicion, and so on. In each case, a rhetorical project "supplemental" at its core appropriates the substance of its host thereby losing, ironically, its identity and its purpose (Gaonkar 1990: 341–366).

Moreover, as Immanuel Kant worried in his famous 1770s pre-critical lectures on philosophical anthropology, if we are unsystematic we may grope haphazardly toward empirical claims. Recent rhetorical anthropologists might be working, say, in the tradition of Aristotle's *Rhetoric,* but without Aristotle's scientific or systematic principles that would allow us to define in nontrivial fashion an appropriate domain of investigation. Indeed the content, scope, and framing of the essays in these three collections suggest as much: descriptive (that is to say scientific) impulses of the *rhetorische Anthropologie* project, and

systematic (that is to say philosophical) impulses, sometimes conflict with the anti-foundational, anti-essentialist, and radically historicizing impulses rooted in the humanistic tradition of sophistic rhetoric championed by many over the three collections, including, it seems, the editors themselves.

So where are the meaningful limits to *rhetorische Anthropologie*? While all three collections pay due attention to the pioneering work of Klaus Dockhorn—the most extensive treatment coming in Dietmar Till's "Anthropologie oder System? Ein Plädoyer für Entscheidungen" (Krause, ed. 2004: 11–25)—Hans Blumenberg's famous essay "Anthropologische Annäherung an die Aktualität der Rhetorik" serves as the founding document for contemporary *rhetorische Anthropologie,* as it should (Blumenberg 1981: 104–136). Not only is the Blumenberg essay masterfully programmatic in its plea, it also initiates a range of concerns that continue to motivate all sorts of recent rhetoricians as well as "end-of-man" poststructuralists of diverse stripes. These concerns include most importantly 1) the error of a philosophical anthropology, ancient or modern, that would characterize man's plenitude ahistorically and thereby mask his structural "lack" (or *Mängelwesen;* Blumenberg 1981: 68); 2) the institutional weight (versus artificiality) of metaphor and other rhetorical tropes; and finally, 3) the ontological consequences of linguistic materialism. The most successful essays in these three collections refrain from filling in humankind with rhetorical, as opposed to philosophical characteristics—say replacing *logos* with *pathos* as the essence of man—and instead take inspiration from Blumenberg's rhetorically informed skepticism and historicism. Most compelling along these lines is the work of Gonsalv K. Mainberger, whose essay "*Homo rhetoricus* deskriptiv, konstitutiv, situativ: Kontroverse um Zivilisationsstile in Frankreich des 17. Jahrhunderts" (Kopperschmidt, ed. 2000: 271–293) shows concretely that *homo rhetoricus* can only be found "en situation" (Kopperschmidt, ed. 2000: 284). One way to characterize the virtues of Mainberger's work here and in his underutilized study "Rhetorica" (1987–88) is to point out how cultural anthropology (concerning the domain Robling aptly designates "second nature" (Metzger and Rapp, eds. 2003: 80) ultimately trumps philosophical anthropology as a model of, and medium for, rhetoric.

Especially useful are those essays that don't rehearse the prehistory of Rhetorische Anthropologie going back, say, to the *homo mensura* principle attributed to Protagoras (Kopperschmidt, ed. 2000: 100), but provide instead concrete revisions in the history of modern disciplines. For instance, Tanja van Hoorn's essay "Affektenlehre – rhetorisch und medizinisch: Zur Entstehung der Anthropologie um 1750 in Halle" (Krause, ed. 2004: 81–94) effectively mobilizes the eighteenth-century psychosomatics of Platner, Stahl, and Meier to argue for a clear distinction between anthropology and ethnology (Krause, ed. 2004: 84), and ultimately to rewrite the story of anthropology's birth as

a discipline in Germany.[2] Meanwhile, Kevin F. Hilliard's "Rhetoric into Anthropology: Herder's Revision of the Theory of Invention" (Krause, ed. 2004: 95–100) details convincingly in a mere six pages how, despite Herder's typically romantic rejection of school rhetoric, prescription in the art of rhetorical invention ultimately became description in Herder's ostensibly anti-rhetorical anthropology (Krause, ed. 2004: 100).

In short, Blumenberg's historically informed skepticism helps us avoid the hasty generalizations that can take hold when we induce universals (of man, of language, of communication …) from cultural specifics. The Rhetoric Culture project already does something similar by investing the comparative methods of cultural anthropology with rhetorical theories of invention. But we should also remember that invention and criticism go hand in hand, as the first theorist of rhetoric culture, Giambattista Vico, argued as early as 1708 (Vico 1990). In order to demonstrate how this insight can inform the Rhetoric Culture project, I now turn to the example of "listening culture," which takes shape when a skeptical critique of rhetoric as the traditional art of speaking opens new possibilities for the art of listening.

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What would rhetoric culture look like from the perspective of the auditor, rather than the speaker? And isn't it strange that we divide this duel identity to obscure the fact that we are always both, whether that means we are speaking at one moment and listening the next, or for that matter listening to oneself as one speaks in what Kaja Silverman has called an "acoustic mirror" that complicates the divisions of interior and exterior, agent and patient, doing and suffering (Silvermann 1988)? When it comes to the art of listening, psychoanalytic theorists like Silverman have useful reminders for the communication theorist, especially when we want to examine the apparatus (such as Silverman's classic cinema) whereby the male voice gains fragile authority over the voice of the mother that speaks volumes to masculine vulnerability, as figured in the open ear. For example, it is no accident that the virtuoso ear in classic cinema such as *Touch of Evil,* or for that matter in the listening technologies of the psychoanalyst or the stethoscope, gains its authority in part by way of its distinction from the female body offering up its truths (think, respectively, of Jonathan Sterne's work on mediate auscultation [Sterne 2003] or Sigmund Freud's *Dora*). For the virtuoso ear, a suffering body resounds anywhere else, which makes the following gender-specific translation from Karl Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* all the more poignant: "To be sensuous is to *suffer.* Man as an objective, sensuous being is therefore a *suffering* being—and because he feels that he suffers, a *passionate* being. Passion is the essential power of man energetically bent on its object" (Karl Marx,

Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844). (And here we should divorce suffering from its implication that pain is primarily what one suffers. In fact, the semantics of classical Greek and Latin allows one to "suffer," or simply to undergo, pleasure, for instance).

After all, who are those pathetic auditors at the other end of a rhetor's message? Not me! Who is persuaded by the rhetor's message? Anyone but me! (I typically admit to my rhetoric students that I can't recall being convinced of anything, although I have, apparently, changed my mind aplenty). By what mechanisms does our imaginary identification so consistently line up with the point of enunciation, that is, the signifier, rather than its object? It is no accident that the ideal orator from Cicero on insists on a virility that would mask our dramatic subjection to language,[3] a subjection that threatens to return in the form of logorrhea (traditionally known as "mere ornamentation") or its opposite: passive listening imagined as the catatonic condition suffered when one finally stops talking in the so-called plain style. To cite just two subsequent sources from the second sophistic, Lucian advises in his *Praeceptor rhetorum* the only rule is not to be silent, press onward! (quoted in Gunderson 2000: 18), while Plutarch recommends continuous vocalization as a conduit for masculine vitality. For a man, "the daily use of the voice in speaking aloud is a marvelous form of exercise, conducive not only to health but also to strength," whereas for a woman speaking too much precipitates a dangerous decline in menses (Gleason 1995: 92, 96; see Gleason [p. 120] on Quintilian and the imperative of constant loquacity).

Symptomatic of a discipline loath to deflate its constituting figure of the ideal orator, rhetoric scholars have virtually ignored accomplished "anthropologists of the past," including Maud W. Gleason and Erik Gunderson, who have plausibly characterized rhetoric as a calisthenics of manhood focalized in the voice (Gleason 1995: XXII). Downplaying rhetoric as some historically transcendent language art, Gleason and Gunderson treat rhetoric as a cultural formation that in this case tells us about the classical performance of masculinity first and foremost. Seneca's ideal orator—the "good man speaking well" (*vir bonus decendi peritus*)—is not a neutral person expressing good moral character (Gunderson 2003: 39–40). Not only is speaking itself tied to virility as a physical act, moral character takes distinctly masculine form when it is tied to public activity. As the stoically inclined Christian Clement of Alexandria put it, "to do (*to dran*) is the mark of the man; to suffer (*to paschein*) is the mark of the woman" (quoted in Gleason 1995: 70). Indeed, as Gleason points out, the very word that Plutarch selects to characterize a woman speaking is not the basic Greek word for talking (*legein*) but what linguists call a marked form that connotes babble or idle chatter: *lalein* (Gleason 1995: 98). It might appear that proper morality in classical antiquity divides along gender lines

with men as speaking agents in the public sphere and women as subjects listening in private.

But it's not so simple. To equate the public voice with masculinity and the private ear with femininity would be misleading, since most obviously women spoke in classical cultures while men sometimes listened appropriately, without either suffering the indignities of gender transgression. How to distinguish then? Gleason provides us with some initial clues when she explains the distinction between vocal exercises for men, which included practicing scales and delivering speeches, and vocal exercises for women, which included practicing scales and singing or reciting poetry (which have therapeutic functions insofar as they dry and warm women's natural constitutions; Gleason 1995: 94–98). However, in emphasizing the mimetic function of listening whereby the male auditor participates in a spectacle of manliness (Gunderson 2003: *Staging Masculinity* 135), Gunderson joins Gleason in downplaying the masculine auditor as judge. No doubt, as Gunderson points out, it is a commonplace of rhetorical theory that the orator is supposed to be the master of other men's hearts and passions (Gunderson 2003: 134), while a long tradition associates oratory with either a martial or magical metaphor of compelling the audience (Gleason 1995: 123). This is what makes rhetoric dangerous for democratically inclined philosophers, or at least philosophers suspicious of demagoguery. How then should we make sense of this classical art that would simultaneously insist upon masculine vocalization while practically prohibiting the passive receptivity that would lie at the other end of the masculine message, whether that implies a woman's ear barred from the public forum or a man's ear rendered passive receptacle? Gleason points to one classical response in the injunction that orators avoid sexual pursuit of the audience (*autoi toutōn erōntes*) while auditors suppress the degenerate passion for sounds that sooth the ears.[4] Meanwhile, Gunderson offers a psychoanalytic explanation focused around the gaze, whereby the auditor, who is first and foremost a spectator, (mis)recognizes the phallus and thereby affirms a scopic régime that constitutes homosocial bonds at the level of the imaginary, while masking the physical vulnerability—i.e., castration—that constitutes those very bonds (Gunderson 2003: 154). But Gleason's injunctions are too little too late, while Gunderson misses the point in his reversion to vision.

Just as we champion active listening over passive listening that would somehow render us suggestible to bad teachers and charlatans from the world of politics and advertising, classical rhetoricians prophylactically invoke the figure of auditor-as-judge. Whether Aristotle's courtroom judge deciding the fate of a plaintiff or Seneca the Elder's young charge judging deportment in a declamation exercise, passive listening is obscured in the figure of auditory agency. It is honorable to listen and then to judge. It is an exercise of our criti-

cal capacities instead of our bodies. It is an affirmation of our civic duties, whether explicitly in the public forums of law and politics or implicitly in ceremony and declamation, where our public persona is iterated under the guise of mere theatrics. And to claim such honor in judging, to exercise these critical capacities, to affirm our civic duties in this manner, is naturally to affirm our age and our class status (e.g., citizen or foreigner), not to mention our manhood. After all, who in the classical context has access to this honorable disposition of the judge? Not children, not slaves, not foreigners, not women. Moreover, it's worth considering in our day what price is paid when we valorize "active listening" as the obvious antidote to passive listening. I think classical prejudices are built into this defensive posture still operative today in rhetorical theory and practice that urge us respectively to think critically, to act up. My approach to listening culture brackets this prejudice through cultural history and explores passive listening itself as a rich, critical posture. We might find solace in circumventing mediocre teachers with critical homeschooling or thinking twice about the suggestions of charlatans. But active listening, as it is understood by theoreticians and practitioners of persuasion from classical antiquity through today, only takes off at dusk like Hegel's owl of Minerva, leaving behind obscurities of our daily lives—including our susceptibility to advertising, our political apathy, our complicity with commonsense, our vulnerability to others. We have much work ahead when it comes to nuances of listening culture in its passive dimension.

And here cultural anthropology, and specifically Ivo Strecker's notion of *genius loci,* or "spirit of place," can help. One important thread that connects my archive-based, critical history of listening to ethnographic fieldwork is a similar commitment to local aesthetics. Just like I wish to mobilize meaningfully local topoi of gender in classical antiquity to denaturalize our communication commonplaces and open new space for inventive listening (see below), a rhetoric culture theorist like Strecker mobilizes a meaningfully local topos such as "Rooks in the Mountains" to evoke the *genius loci* of Hamar (Strecker 2000). When it comes to situating ways of communicating in ways of being, however, anthropologists are more than fellow travelers; they have some strategies that I find applicable as a rhetorician.

Concerned, like Stephen Tyler, that ethnographies lose their grip when held to the mathematizing standards of science and language philosophy (which typically prioritize literalness, symbolic reductions, and universal translatability), Strecker proposes instead the rhetorical notion of *genius loci* as a guide for anthropologists.[5] Crucial to this concept for Strecker is the feeling for local realities—including physical landscape and social institution—which guides the inventive practices of a given culture and thus guide its anthropology. For instance, Strecker foregrounds Alfred Gell's essay "The Language of the Forest:

Landscape and Phonological Iconism in Umeda" to explain how an "acoustic modality" characterizes the *genius loci* of Umeda forest culture, producing both the contours of Umeda language (shaped by metaphors of sound rather than vision), and thus Umeda anthropology (Strecker 2000: 88–90). In turn, Steven Feld's seminal study *Sound and Sentiment: Birds, Weeping, Poetics, and Song in Kaluli Expression* grounds social institution in myth. While suggesting (like Gell) that the Kaluli of Papau New Guinea have a basic sound rather than sight orientation (Feld 1982: 61), Feld helpfully grounds social institution in a focal myth, "The Boy Who Became a Muni Bird," which provides the local contours that uniquely identify place and enable the impetus for invention. By learning to listen to the Kaluli world through this focal myth where "social sentiment, mediated by birds, is metaphorically expressed in sound" Feld (1982: 42) invents his own ritual songs that are deeply appropriate for ethnographic engagement.

As a rhetorician working on "listening culture" in the archives of Europe and the United States, what I find useful in Strecker's *genius loci* is the feeling for place that grounds communication theory. Unsatisfied with general models coming from scientific psychology or the scientistic field of interpersonal communication, I am interested in models that can help us understand the cultural idiosyncrasies that "irrationally" constrain one's communication while at the same time providing opportunities for invention. Like Steven Feld working through the constraints and opportunities for communication in a Kaluli culture focused in the myth "The Boy Who Became a Muni Bird," I work through the constraints and opportunities for communication in a Western tradition focused, among other places, in gendered myths of speaking and listening. However, I depart from cultural anthropology insofar as I pair invention with criticism.

In describing *genius loci* as "the concrete reality man has to face and come to terms with in his daily life" (Norberg-Schultz, quoted in Strecker 2000: 85), the anthropologist hastily situates him or herself "within" the dominant culture however described, and thus misses opportunities for imminent criticism. "People perceive the characteristics of their environment as a kind of 'environmental image' that provides them with an orientation and a sense of security," continues Strecker (2000: 86); but I would ask, whose sense of security and at what price? What is the history of that orientation that necessarily privileges certain perspectives (and people) over others? My project might begin with the observation that certain gender myths such as Odysseus and the Harpies orient our speaking and listening, but in this case responsible invention—which is to say invention that goes beyond variations on a given theme—requires the historical skepticism and critical theory that brackets these myths as given. Since our gendered myths of activity and passivity distort communication

fundamentally, we must as Rhetoric Culture theorist distance ourselves from the "reality" these myths impose.

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My larger project on the art of listening critically engages our received active/passive dyad in order to reshape our auditory culture around publicity rather than intimacy. To show how this project in criticism and invention works concretely, I now conclude with the figure of the "public ear" as it is articulated in a series of seventeenth-century sermons and treatises on listening.

Our romantic bent would suggest that listening is an essentially private affair because it marks the moment when speech or other elements of the audible world take a turn toward me. It is "I" who shapes external sounds to my personal sensibilities and thereby makes them my own. Emblematics reveal this bias in the visible organ of hearing, grammar in the predication of the first-person pronoun (typically I hear), and pop psychology in its fixation on personal responsibility. In *Listening: The Forgotten Skill* (1995), Madelyn Burley-Allen places responsibility for smooth corporate communication on the middle manager who needs to listen empathically rather than judgmentally in order to bolster production, and then on underlings such as the personal assistant who needs to listen to his or her boss without the distorting emotions of resentment and self-hatred. What we reductively consider "interpersonal communication" thereby sets the external boundaries of speech and listening: private individuals have the responsibility to engage others according to a superficial ethics of care. Ostensibly no politics, no history. You can't love someone else until you love yourself; empathic listening is the key to better personal and professional relationships, and so on.

Pre-Romantics would find all of this odd, and again my wager is that cultural history can help us engage our acoustic world differently. First we can work outward from a moment when a significant element of our "counter"culture—meaning in this case auditory culture—enjoyed predominance, because that is where we can most readily mobilize language and sensibilities that carry critical weight in the present. The rich auditory culture of seventeenth-century English Puritanism provides the most appropriate focal point for this particular project because, among other things, it serves as a counterpoint to the classical and modern communication cultures outlined above. Simply listing some authors and titles should give you a sense for the auditory culture we have largely forgotten: Hugh Roberts, *The day of hearing* (1600); Robert Wilkinson, *A sermon of hearing, or, jewell for the ear* (1602[2]); Stephen Egerton, *The boring of the eare* (1623); William Harrison, *A plaine and profitable exposition, of the parable of the sower and the seede. wherein is plainly set forth, the difference of hearers, both good and bad* (1625); Thomas Shepherd, *Of Ineffectual Hearing the Word*

(1652[2]). Meanwhile natural-scientific treatises such as Richard Brathwaite's *Essaies upon the five senses* (1620) and contemporaneous dramatic works including Shakespeare's acoustically paranoid *Othello,* set the stage for a culture generally interested in "the other side of language." Indeed, as Kenneth Gross suggests in *Shakespeare's Noise* (2001), Renaissance drama revolves around the work of slander, hearsay, and other obvious forms of social audition that travesty "the common Renaissance emblem of the ruler as a Herculean rhetorician, able to draw those who hear him by fantastic chains that radiate from his mouth to their ears" (and here you might recall, for example, the frontispiece to Thomas Wilson's 1560 *Art of Rhetoric*). Moreover, in Renaissance drama and beyond, continues Gross, "the ear of the king, the confessor, the judge, the spy, the actor, the lover—each is different" (Gross 2006: 35), which again has ramifications for the rhetorician. Rhetorical theory should be just as nuanced regarding the listener as the speaker, and, what's more, we should think about how the listener is fractured as a subject just like the speaker is.

So, how exactly does the ear figure differently in the primary material I have introduced? Most importantly, listening is characterized explicitly as a public, and not a private act. Of course for the devout, listening to the Word of God is the acoustic event *par excellence,* which immediately makes things interesting because for our social scientists of communication this wouldn't be an acoustic event at all. And what does it look like when a listening model is built around this nonevent? Significantly for these ministers of the Word, the privacy of the home is reserved for private prayer whereas "the public sphere is for listening" (Roberts 1600: 63). "Cannot we sit at home and read a sermon?" asks an imaginary interlocutor in Jeremiah Burroughes's 1646 *Gospel-worship … hearing the Word.* No, because "the great ordinance is the preaching of the word, faith comes by hearing, the Scripture saith and never by reading" (Burroughes 1646: 167). Several ministers later collect their advice in a treatise "Concerning Hearing the Word," which dramatically qualifies what they call the "bare hearing" of sacred scripture "read in a more private Way, and by Persons of a private Character" (Newman et al. 1713: 9). In sum, we are told that "hearing the Word preach'd is a social Duty" unlike prayer, which can be done in private (Newman et al. 1713: 25). Fundamental in all of these accounts is the assumption that listening, like speaking, is a highly complex, rhetorical activity that warrants constant practice and reflection. The active listener-as-judge tells only part of the story while passive listening has a public function beyond indoctrination.

As speakers we negotiate the available means of persuasion in each case, which means that we cultivate language skills (*logos*) appropriate to a range of potential topics and circumstances, and we maximize our appeal by optimally situating persona in a social field (*ethos* and *pathos*). Likewise, as listeners we

cultivate language skills appropriate to a range of potential topics and circumstances, and we maximize our "attention" by optimally situating persona in a social field. Along with scriptural injunctions to hear truly and not just barely, these Puritan treatises and sermons therefore provide all sorts of practical injunctions. Prepare the soil by meditating upon Scripture and completing worldly business that might distract you. Then in church continue to fight the enemies of attention such as stray thoughts, wandering eyes, needless shifting and stirring, irreverent talking and laughing. Come to church with something in your stomach but not too much, otherwise you'll doze off. Remember to jostle your slumbering neighbors, and so on. After all, if you can stay awake for a play and thereafter repeat long discourses point for point, then certainly you should be able to do the same in church, observes Thomas Taylor (1634: 42). And finally for Stephen Egerton, the social character of hearing entails concrete social responsibility: the social body must be in place at the right time in order for the public ear to function, and therefore individuals have the responsibility to mobilize those who would otherwise be dismembered, namely children, the elderly, the infirm (Egerton 1623: 25–28).

As cynics we note the obvious: what preacher wouldn't want pliable bodies in the pews? But that isn't the whole story. From our perspective, this seventeenth-century discourse denaturalizes the ear and the listening process. It underscores the fact that something special happens when one listens together with others as opposed to listening by oneself, and it suggests that our ears have a public character irreducible to the capacity for judgment. And once this public ear is tuned, we can then follow its function elsewhere, beyond the immediate context of these sermons, which are truly transitional between premodern and late-modern prejudices in so far as they explicitly contrast public and private spheres. For instance, in the premodern biblical context cited by these ministers, listening has nothing to do with the communication hurdles of private personhood or the anxieties of masculine agency. From Exodus through Thessalonians, listening is important because it is a vehicle for God's Word, authority, and grace, it unifies a people and it motivates; the scope of listening is commands, confessions, divine truth, and prophecy. That is to say, what we as social scientists consider "interpersonal communication" becomes unthinkable in the biblical context and beyond. After all, the spiritual world has a voice and prophets are no more than vehicles, and so on.

Likewise, in the classical context as represented by Aristotle "interpersonal communication" helps little to understand the scope of listening, which is formally confined to public spheres of judicial, deliberative, and epideictic rhetoric. Though typically overlooked by modern scholars, Aristotle himself establishes that the discipline falls into three divisions determined by the three

"classes" of listeners—judge, assemblyman, or ceremonial auditor—insisting that the listener, and not the speaker or topic, determines a speech's end and object. However, analysis along these lines must work by way of implication, because the art of rhetoric Aristotle details will consistently take the perspective of the speaker who needs to learn human psychology in order to speak effectively; it won't *per se* take up the listener's perspective. That we must reconstruct.

Of course, this passage from Aristotle also speaks to the listener's agency and social construction. Among other things, privilege will multiply the positions from which I can listen with authority, while abjection will entail particular forms of social deafness; for example, the ears of Aristotle's slave have no public function beyond the transmission of authority, that is, gossip. The listener's agency, in other words, cannot be attributed to some noble character that resides equally and to the same degree in each of us, where it waits to pass judgment. Individual agency is the product of institution. Likewise, the listener's passivity cannot be attributed to some abject character that resides equally and to the same degree in each of us, where it simply waits. Individual passivity is also the product of institution, and must be analyzed as such.

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Finally, we should notice that when listening shifts definitively from a public act to an intimate experience—a moment marked by Freudian psychoanalysis—new dysfunctions of the social ear emerge. To whom do we listen as first-world citizens outfitted with all sorts of hearing aids, including our global interests and pervasive media? Do we hear illiterate peasantry, tribals, or the subproletariat, to invoke Gayatri Spivak's famous trivium of the subaltern (Spivak 1988)? This is where listening and the social technologies of empathy meet. At any given moment our public ear is tuned in certain directions and not in others, which isn't arbitrary or accidental but is rather dependent upon what Aristotle calls "frame of mind," or, more accurately, in the original Greek, *pathos.* And *pathos,* which includes shared experience, prejudice, and disposition, is for Aristotle a thoroughly rhetorical construct. For instance, Aristotelian suffering must be vividly rendered in order to evoke pity, it must be considered unjust, and the person who pities must be addressed as a certain "kind" of person, namely, the sort who might similarly suffer without cause (i.e., not Spivak's subaltern). Likewise, we can investigate how we are subject to technologies of vivid representation (or deafness), judgments of just or unjust suffering, and, finally, habits of perception that define who is sufficiently like us to deserve our ear, and who is not.

Notes

1. I thank *Rhetorica: Journal of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric* for allowing me to draw substantially from my book review appearing in Volume 24.4 (2006).
2. See also John H. Zammito (2002). Despite his enthusiastic citation of the rhetorically informed critic of eighteenth-century literature Hans-Jürgen Schings, Zammito leaves out rhetoric from his index altogether and from his list of inquiries that helped crystallize anthropology around the year 1772, which include the medical model of physiological psychology, the biological model of the animal soul, the pragmatic or conjectural model of cultural-historical theory, the literary-psychological model of the new novel including travel literature, and a philosophical model of rational psychology grounded in the quandaries of substance interaction. Indeed, the 1772 date is symptomatic of a justifiable but selective philosophical genealogy that would ignore an important element of Odo Marquard's article on "Anthropologie" in the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie,* which significantly credits the first anthropology lecture in Germany to a professional rhetorician, Gottfried Polycarp Müller (delivered in Leipzig, 1719).
3. See, for instance, *Orator* 18.59 and *De officiis* 1.128–30 on masculine deportment.
4. Gleason 1995: 125, 117 points to Quintilian 11.3.60.
5. A concept derived from Christian Norberg-Schultz (1980); and Martin Heidegger (1971).

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CHAPTER 5

Practice of Rhetoric, Rhetoric of Practice

Vincenzo Cannada Bartoli

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

> Dans l'immense corpus rhétorique consacré à l'art de dire ou de faire, les sophistes ont une place privilègiée, du point de vue des tactiques … cette tradition d'une logique articulée sur la conjoncture et sur le vouloir de l'autre conduit jusqu'à la sociolinguistique contemporaire.
>
> —Michel De Certeau, "L'invention du quotidien"

The present essay grows out of this question: What is it that makes the chiasmus "practice of rhetoric, rhetoric of practice" at first so convincing but then, on second thought, so agonizingly difficult to understand? To answer, we need to reconsider the intersection of rhetoric and practice. Among the many authors dealing with this subject, Farrell (1999) has examined rhetoric in terms of practice, and practice in terms of rhetoric, and his questions are very close to those I pose below. However, we differ in our basic interests—philosophy for him, ethnography for me—and while Farrell examines the political aspects of rhetoric and *phronesis* in an intellectual environment influenced by Gadamer, Arendt, and Toulmin, I explore the relevance of rhetoric for a study of practice (and implicitly also for culture) in the intellectual milieu of social studies where Gadamer dialogues with Bourdieu, Foucault, and De Certeau.

It is easy to conceive of practice being at the core of rhetoric owing to the applied dimension of the subject and to the need to practice oratory in order to become a successful rhetorician. Furthermore, it needs little mental exer-

tion to perceive that "practice of rhetoric" may also refer to the use of rhetoric in different historical contexts and for different purposes, and to envisage how specific individuals or groups can be identified as agents who "practice" various kinds of rhetoric. But what about the reverse, what about "rhetoric of practice"? Here, right from the beginning the answer looks more difficult, and only upon some reflection it comes to mind that "rhetoric of practice" may either refer to speech as it is employed (skillfully or less skillfully) in social life, or to the discourse that may develop about the notion of rhetoric itself. The latter would be akin to a rhetorics, where the s distinguishes the scholarly institution from its object of study like economics/economy, politics/politic, and so on. But no discipline has as yet grown out of and around the concept of practice. This, of course, doesn't imply that social practice, in the sense both of being the object studied and of being inscribed in the way of studying, is not central to some disciplines, but it means that "practice" has not flourished as have comparable themes in philosophy and the social sciences. Rhetoric developed as part of a "high tradition" that focused on *logos* and was accorded great social prestige. Furthermore, it was associated with public, political life; was part of written as well as spoken discourse; was the outcome of training and learning; and was endowed with a rich heritage of *topoi.* Practice, on the other hand, is a notion apparently with only a relatively recent history, and its context seems to be the domain of the lower classes; of the illiterate and uneducated; of dirty work and struggles to cope with the vicissitudes of life; of immediate and intuitive action.

This dualism was questioned by Michel De Certeau (1980), who, against over-deterministic approaches to social practice, stressed the rhetorical dimension and the possible value of resistance accorded to the "tactics" of practice enacted by social actors. Since antiquity, however, practice and rhetoric have been conceived as parts of a twofold object. It was Gadamer who, in *Truth and Method,* linked these two dimensions of social life, defining rhetoric as "practical mastery":

> It is evident that rhetoric is not just a theory of discursive forms and of instruments for confutation, but that, on the basis of a natural attitude, it may develop to become a *practical mastery,* without any need of a theoretical reflection on its means. (Gadamer 1996: 227; emphasis added)

This definition anticipates Bourdieu's focus on the dimension of practice and on practical skill. But Gadamer's definition is important because it reverses a definition of rhetoric given by Plato in his *Gorgias.*

In a famous passage of *Gorgias,* the Sophist Polus, trying to corner Socrates, asks him to define rhetoric. Socrates answers that rhetoric is *empereia.* This has been translated as "practical skill" or "routine," terms that mark not so much

an endowment but an epistemic absence. To define rhetoric as *empereia* is part of Plato's critique, which holds that rhetoric does not possess the true features of science but belongs more to *doxa* than to *episteme.* Later, widening his view, he compares rhetoric to a false art, or flattery (*kolakeia*), that gives false care for the body and a false care for the soul. Plato condemns rhetoric for its total absence of ethics (McCabe 1994). This passage from *Gorgias* has often been cited and criticized, as for example by Vickers in his seminal book *In defence of rhetoric* (1986), but here I want to point out that it may also make a contribution to the "rhetoric of practice," for when Plato argued that the flexibility and contextual adaptability of rhetoric proved not so much its strength (as the Sophists would have it) but its weakness, and when he said that rhetoric was too context-dependent and without a proper content on its own to be taught except in a fraudulent way, he opened up an unexpected vista on "practice." If, as he rightly says, it is impossible to teach rhetoric, then this skill must be appropriated in some other way. A skill may be acquired not through theoretical preparation or by following a project conceived in advance but through experience growing out of context and embedded in action. This is akin to the genius of Lévi Strauss's famous bricoleur (1962), whose art consists of improvising with odds and ends. Empirical anthropological studies also show how apprenticeship is more often based on careful observations and trial-and-error procedures than on formal instruction supplied by a master (see Herzfeld 2004 for young Greek artisans; Duranti and Burrell 2004 for jazz musicians; Angioni 1986 for rural Sardinia).

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Learning "practices" constitute a domain widely investigated in cognitive studies. In recent years, cognitive anthropologists such as Dan Sperber (1996) and Pascal Boyer (1994, 2001) or Scott Atran, while advancing some models of cultural transmission, repeatedly stressed that a theory of culture must be compatible with the cognitive dimension of the human mind. Boyer has often pointed out how, if it is to be retained in social memory, a representation must be at once different from and compatible with common social representations. Drawing heavily on experimental psychology, this approach may at first seem distant from other perspectives on social practice, such as that of Bourdieu, for example. Yet, it is another way of looking at the domain of "practice" and may indirectly be fruitful for rhetoric. To be convincing a speaker has, first of all, to get the attention of the hearer, and this presupposes and enacts a practice-based theory of cognition. Cognitive studies investigate these implicit assumptions and the various ways in which social actors process and realize different "inputs" through the work of categories. A cognition-based theory of rhetoric should point out the way in which, in the course of interactions, social actors

are able to give life to, and maintain an intersubjective world by drawing on the co-construction of shared domains that transform "inputs" to "outputs" through rhetoric. Some studies, such as Goodwin's (2002), which focus on the cognitive dimension of interaction, seem already to pursue this goal. Much, however, remains to be done in this area.

In *Gorgias,* Plato responds to Polus and Gorgias, by saying that rhetoric is not exactly *kolakeia* or "false art" but part of it. Here Plato makes two moves at once. On the one hand he downgrades rhetoric as "false," while on the other hand he upgrades it and attributes to it even more power than the Sophists would have done by including in it not only speech but also other modes of expressions such as right or wrong ways of cultivating the body. So, ironically, while trying to curb or even destroy, to paraphrase Ricoeur (1978), the "rule of rhetoric," Plato enlarged its field by extending it to other social practices, thus opening up a direction later followed by Herzfeld and other pioneers of Rhetoric Culture theory:

> Social sciences simply offer a special illustration of a larger principle, the role of rhetoric in everyday social action. A social poetics treats all social interaction, not only as employing rhetoric, but also as rhetorical in its own right. That verbal rhetoric plays an important role part in channeling and shaping social relations has long been recognized and discussed. … But I want to argue something more radical: that the entirety of social interaction—not just the linguistic and quasi-linguistic aspects—is rhetorical. (Herzfeld 1997: 141)

Thus, rhetoric is more than the art of composing speeches, and the "false arts" of cooking, cosmetics, and costume have now become domains widely investigated in social studies and include a large array of social practices, all of which involve rhetoric as "practical mastery." Bourdieu's study of how various ways of dressing are related to a need for distinction (1982) also allows us to understand how rhetoric has played a double role, serving not only the creative act of communicating but also as analysis of communication. This, in turn, works as a potential critique of opposing communicative strategies by debunking them as blatant strategies of persuasion. Deconstructing communication has therefore always been a constitutive part of rhetoric. As Aristotle said, "If the speaker is arguing against an opponent or against some theory … it is necessary to make use of speech to destroy the opposing arguments, against which he speaks as if they were the actual opponent" (*Rhetoric,* II, xviii, 1). This is a common practice that can be found in family disputes (Ochs and Taylor 1992), in formal institutions like tribunals (Drew and Heritage 1992) and wherever we find different visions, particularly in the political domain (Duranti 1994). In this sense, rhetoric might be considered an "ancestor" of com-

munication studies and of the deconstructive perspectives on social action pursued by ethnomethodologists. Since the beginning, this double attitude has been not just a scholarly study on its own, but a situated practice. This is why rhetoric, besides being *instrumentum regni* may well play even the opposite role of contesting power, serving as well the ghostwriter and the critic of official discourse. Thus, resistance can be done not just verbally but through a ruse, a practice-based tactic.

> La recherche s'est surtout consacrée aux pratiques de l'espace, aux manières de fréquenter un lieu, aux procès complexes de l'art culinaire, et aux mille façons d'instaurer une fiabilité dans les situations subies, c'est-à-dire d'y ouvrir une possibilité de les vivre en y réintroduisant la mobilité plurielle d'intérêts et de plaisirs, un art de manipuler et de jouir. (De Certeau 1980: LI)

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> The first attitude, which we could call logical, has to do with the purpose of solving, through the application of rules, laws and norms to which we accord our adhesion, any problem or difficulty which may occur in the most different situations we can image. … At the opposite of this attitude stands the practical man, who solves problems only at the time they are occurring, rethinking his notions and rules in a way functional to real situations and to decisions unavoidable for his acting. (Perelman; Olbrechts-Tyteca 1966: 207–208)

Looking for the possible roots of "practice" we naturally turn first to Aristotle. His distinction between theoretical and productive sciences indicates an interest in practice, but more important in this respect are his concepts of *phronesis* (practical wisdom) and *arete* (virtue). The former is a notion widely employed and revitalized by Gadamer, in *Truth and Method* and elsewhere (Gadamer 1975), to distinguish between a narrow and a wide understanding of practice. In this sense, Gadamer was a leading figure in the development of Rhetoric Culture theory. His interest in rhetoric was related to his deep knowledge of (ancient) philosophy and to his project and practice of hermeneutics. Concerning virtue as the complement of practical wisdom, recall that Aristotle says:

> Virtue then is a disposition (*hexis*) to act by a free choice, consisting essentially in a mean relative to us, this being determined by reason, as the wise man (*phronimos*) would determine it. … Yet to what degree and how seriously a man must err to be blamed is not easy to define on principle. For in fact no object of perception is easy to define; and such questions of degree depend on particular circumstances. (Aristotle, NE II, vi, 1106b 36-1107a 2ix - NE, II, ix, 1109b 21–24)

Here the focus is on the moral aspect of choice, and on the possible errors that make a man guilty. At the same time, virtue is characterized as a disposition to act that leaves room for a host of possibilities that may be realized by the *phronimos* (wise man). Practical wisdom shares further attributes with social practice in that it is not attained through intellectual exercise but through habit. As Aristotle says, it is the continual application of habitual ways of acting that gives rise to an ethical attitude:

> Moral or ethical virtue is the product of habit (ethos), and took its name with a slight variation from it. … Virtues therefore are engendered in us neither by nor against nature; nature gives us the capacity to receive them, and this capacity is brought to maturity by habit. (Aristotle, NE, II, 1, 1103a 17–19, 24–26)

In this quotation we see the roots of the concept of *habitus,* as theorized by Aquinas in his ethics, and later promoted by Bourdieu, Foucault, and De Certeau, as a new way of conceptualizing society and social theory. But let us not forget that these latter scholars owe much to Marx. Marx demanded that philosophers should not only interpret the world but seek to transform it, and it was he who introduced *praxis* into the study of society and thereby turned it into a wider teleological project. Among the Marxist theorists, Antonio Gramsci accorded to praxis a main role. He attributed two meanings to it. The first, perhaps better known, is political, and refers to a practice that transforms the world. The second refers to an unaware way of acting, when the "mass-man" is still unconscious of his political significance and his potentially active role in transforming the world:

> The mass-man acts practically, but has not a clear theoretical awareness of his acting, which is a way of knowing the world in that it transforms it. His theoretical consciousness may be in contrast with his acting. We could even say that he has two theoretical consciousnesses (or a contradictory consciousness): the first one is implicit in his acting and really unifies him with his collaborators in the practical transforming of reality, the second one is superficially explicit or verbal, is inherited from the past and received without critique. (Gramsci 1975: 1385)

In summary, the concept of practice seems to have at least three different roots, variously related. A first meaning emerges somehow in opposition to "theoretic" and is found in the classical Aristotelian distinction between theoretical and productive sciences. The second meaning of practice has to do with the moral dimension and the possibility of right conduct. The classical reference could be that of Kant, but even here the Aristotelian notions of *phronesis* and *arete* are central concerns.

The third sense is the Marxian meaning of *praxis.* All three definitions share—in different degrees and in different ways—a reference to a wider community, which motivates and judges action. A possible common feature of these definitions, however, is that every practice may be fully determined only by its context.

Finally, we may add Wittgenstein's ideas about how to follow a rule. His words are clear enough about this. In our day-to-day actions we cannot always go back to rational plans; we follow rules, and "to follow a rule is a practice." In a paper devoted to the relation between Wittgenstein and Bourdieu, Charles Taylor (1999) said that if Wittgenstein was the one to indicate the way, Bourdieu transformed his intuitions into a program of social research through the concept of *habitus.* Bourdieu, however, was not the only one to focus on social practice and on the way in which social actors reproduce "social sense." Ethnomethodology is also a field of research focused on these communicative practices.

■ ■ ■

Reflecting on practice, we face the problem of individual agency, or, expressed differently, we face the double-edged problem of the ways in which ethos moulds individuals, and individuals mould ethos. This is why Bourdieu, looking to language, turned to the Sophists:

> Ce n'est pas par hazard que les Sophistes (on pense en particulier à Protagoras et au Gorgias de Platon) qui, à la différence des purs grammairiens, visaient à s'assurer et à transmettre la maîtrise pratique d'un language d'action, ont été les premiers à poser comme tel le problème du kairos, du moment opportun ou favorable et des paroles justes et appropriées au lieu et au moment: rhéteurs, ils étaient prédisposés à faire une philosophie de la pratique du language commun comme stratègie. (Bourdieu 1980 : 54–55)

Here, the magic word *strategy* (or its French equivalent) comes in original italics. The use of this term in the theory of social practice has been both applauded and criticized, for its use affirms the distinct character of social practice theory vis-à-vis other theoretical perspectives. *Strategy* is a wide-ranging term, which could give the wrong impression of a rational plan prior to action and, in the quotation above it is exactly against this misunderstanding that Bourdieu underlines the role played by *kairos.* To speak of *kairos* or appropriate circumstances implies that one is aware of a degree of indeterminacy in social life, and of unpredictable and unique historical circumstances. This is why ancient *kairos* theory helps us to understand current agency theory (Duranti 2004), with its notions of inherited and enacted practice, and enables us to grasp the concept of ruse developed by Michel De Certeau (1980). Focusing

on the ruse allows one to look at the space between social actors and norms (De Certeau 1980: xlvi). Here lies the possibility of what the Goodwins (1990) have called "interstitial arguments" and multiple overlaps of meanings.

Implicit in the concept of ruse is the social actors' awareness of structural constraints. This awareness enables them to overcome, subvert, utilize, or even "flout" social conventions, maxims and imperatives Grice (1975). Or, as De Certeau says, "Il est toujours bon de se rappeller qu' il ne faut pas prendre les gens pour des idiots" (1980: 255). Thus, focusing on ruse or *kairos* or, broadly speaking, general agency leads to a different perspective on rhetoric than, say, focusing on its more known parts (*inventio, elocutio,* etc.) or on tropes and figures, because we get away from *rhetorica docens* and closer to *rhetorica utens* (Vickers 1988). This, in turn, leads us to better appreciate other forms of rhetoric that do not belong to Western traditions, and the study of which lies at the heart of the Rhetoric Culture project.

Rhetoric has paid a lot of attention to the body as an active agent of communication, and many treatises include detailed prescriptions for how to achieve a "mastery of the body," as in "how to modulate voice, what is the right way of gesturing according to the different topics and to the different communicative intentions?" Theorists of social practice accorded a central role to the body. Foucault analyzed "bio-politics" (2004) and the way in which Western institutions construed and shaped a discourse around the body, even through architecture (1975), while Bourdieu looked at the body as the locus that structures *habitus* (1980) and differences of gender.

But different perspectives, with a more naturalistic attitude, have taken the body as an interpretive object. Thus Erving Goffman made the concept of "face" central to his theory (Goffman 1967), and systematically attended to nonverbal dimensions of communication (Goffman 1981). He expanded the concept of communication to include body language, as did Dell Hymes (1972) with his concept of "communicative competence." Early pioneers in the area of expanded rhetorical competence were Birdwhistell (1952), Hall (1963), Scheflen (1973), and Kendon (1972). Other scholars have sought to delineate the body's communicative dimensions, and to link this perspective with social practice theory. Haviland (2004) examined the role of gesture in narratives, linking it with indexicality, while Goodwin (2003) tried to develop new ways of describing and representing gestures. However, the problem of finding a universal standard to represent gesture has remained an open problem.

On the theme of the body we find, then, two different perspectives that represent a tension between a "political" and a "naturalistic" attitude. The "political" gaze is more interested in historical and sociological links than in detailed descriptions of body language. In contrast, the "naturalistic" attitude is primarily interested in describing the body as a communicative resource, and

secondarily in linking it with broader political discourses. Owing to their differing paradigms, it may be difficult to join these disparate modes of inquiry. Perhaps rhetoric, with its double nature of communicative practice can play the role of a "third way." This is why I would like to end these admittedly provisional and incomplete reflections on the practice of rhetoric and the rhetoric of practice by turning to the problem of social description, which lies at the core of ethnography. In particular, I focus on the implications of a gesture.

While studying two versions of a ritual adopted for celebrating different saints in villages not far from Rome, I was struck by what seemed to be a peculiar gesture. In the village of Montorio, the saint's ceremony is held by just two families, while in the village Scandriglia it involved almost the entire village. To better understand this difference, I asked a man from Montorio why they celebrated the saint in this "private" way, as it was called. He told me the local myth of the saint, widely known in both villages, according to which a pagan father murdered his sainted daughter. The man said that when the dead body of the daughter was recovered a fog descended. This meant that she did not want brilliant feasting to commemorate her death, and as she was of a noble and rich family she did not need money to be collected for her burial. I was impressed by this exegesis, which linked myth and ritual through a subtle interpretation. The man was exploiting the myth to sustain the local version of ritual, drawing on particulars of the myth.

However, some time later I told this interpretation to a woman from Scandriglia. She listened patiently, and when I finished she just paused a little, turned to me, gave me a stare and made a very eloquent gesture with her hand as if to say, "what damned thing is he saying?" The ritual thus had a rhetorical side. People talked about a practice that, in itself, incorporated a rhetoric that gave the ritual its form and meaning. Thus, the Montorian exegesis drew an analogy between myth and ritual and was meant to legitimize the latter (and possibly to censor other ritual forms). Of course, the woman knew the myth and was probably also aware of this kind of possible exegesis (or, at least, that this kind of myth may give rise to this kind of exegesis), but instead of contesting it point by point and proposing an alternative interpretation she refuted it without any further comment, dismantling and dismissing it through a single gesture.

I kept thinking for a long time about that gesture and only recently it occurred to me that maybe it was a typical example of the rhetoric of anti-rhetoric, and that its ultimate target was not just the man from Montorio but also me. Apparently addressing a single (absent) man whose words had been reported by the ethnographer, the gesture itself created a space for a possible overlap of meanings and addressees, not just to the words reported, but also to the reporter who was reporting them. Perhaps the multiple targets of the

gesture included both the interpretation of the myth and the attention paid to it by the ethnographer, thus simultaneously contesting his right to report such discourse and opposing him with a gesture accompanied by silence, the most powerful "implicature."

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CHAPTER 6

Chiastic Thought and Culture

A Reading of Claude Lévi-Strauss[1]

Boris Wiseman

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This chapter entertains a special relationship with the Rhetoric Culture project as a whole in as much as the dynamic at the heart of this project is itself chiastic. One of the characteristics of Rhetoric Culture theory is the reversibility of its "critical moments" (see the introduction to this volume). In as much as all social and cultural practices are linguistically mediated, they are at least in part tributary to rhetoric. One may therefore turn to rhetoric to make sense of these practices and shed light on the dynamics that underpin them. The need to interrelate anthropology and rhetoric arises, in this respect, out of the imbrication of linguistic and social practices, rhetoric and praxis. Rhetoric, construed as an art (*technê*) of persuasion, is in essence a form of agency theory. However, it is not only the beliefs, customs, and institutions studied by anthropologists that are grounded in rhetoric but the anthropologist's own understandings and interpretations. The trajectory that leads from rhetoric to ethnography therefore inevitably leads back to rhetoric. Rhetorical figures are not mere ornaments of language, something added to a theoretically "pure" zero degree of linguistic expression, but an integral part of all language. What "rhetoric" designates isn't another code different from that used in "ordinary" communication, but a displacement of meaning inherent in all languages, including popular (thus, a "wild" rhetoric exists alongside its "domesticated" counterpart). For this reason, rhetorical figures should be seen as the very means whereby anthropology grasps its object, indeed constitutes the world as an object of understanding. Anthropological knowledge cannot

be separated from the discourses that vehicle it and the rhetorical figures they contain. As Yeats put it in his poem "Among School Children": "How can we know the dancer from the dance?" It is the second part of this journey, when the ethnography of rhetoric converts into the rhetoric of ethnography, that I will be concerned with here.

The chiastic reversals that are characteristic of Rhetoric Culture theory function at many different levels, as the authors of the introduction to this volume make clear. As well as the reversal already evoked above, sign and object, communication and representation also maintain chiastic relations with one another. Before turning to Lévi-Strauss, it is worth indicating here one further possible reversal of the Rhetoric Culture project, one that points in the direction of valuable future developments. The ethnography of rhetoric constitutes a pluralization and decentering of rhetoric in which the rhetorician has, in principle, as much to learn as the anthropologist. The Rhetoric Culture project leads not only to a rhetorically informed anthropology but also an anthropologically informed—and transformed—rhetoric. Put differently, Rhetoric Culture theory is also about how tropes travel. Here, we need to ask how the rhetorical theories (in a broad sense of the expression) developed by the populations studied by anthropologists conflict or correlate with the theories developed by Western thought. Do such populations, for example, differentiate between types of discourse (Aristotle recognized three: deliberative, judicial, and epideictic) and codify their usage? If so, what can we learn from a confrontation of indigenous and Western typologies?

Since its inception in ancient Greece, Western rhetoric has consisted in a vast classificatory enterprise whose ambition is arguably the taming of language (its instrumentalization). Every element of language—its materials, the genres or styles to which it gives rise, the parts of the discourses it uses—is the object of complex and variable taxonomies. The history of rhetoric from Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian onward, consists in large part in the revision by one rhetorician of the classificatory systems elaborated by another. In this connection, Rhetoric Culture theory may be seen as an exploration of the limits of these classificatory systems and hence, also, of the ideologies that underpin them. The ethnography of rhetorical practices calls for a critique of rhetoric as a meta-discourse and of the system of values that support its framing concepts. For rhetoric is an historically and culturally determined notion. The Western concept of rhetoric is inseparable, for example, from the history of logic (see the importance that Aristotle attributes to enthymeme in his *Rhetoric*) and from a certain idea of "literature," one that is neither universal nor timeless. Although Aristotle distinguished and even opposed rhetoric and poetics, and hence the two kinds of discourse that are their respective object (logocentric and imaginative), with Ovid and Cicero these practices started to be conflated

and by the Middle Ages the great rhetoricians were also great poets (Barthes 1970: 908). But what should we make of a rhetoric divorced from these key ideas? Rhetoric is also the product of a certain type of social, political, and even legal system. Rhetoric, in its earliest forms, emerged when a new form of trial by popular jury was instituted in Greece in around 485 BCE. The result was that eloquence became an important legal tool (Barthes 1970: 904).[2] The subsequent rise of rhetoric went hand in hand with that of Greek democracies, in which it was seen as a means to success in public life. Here too, one must ask what the place of rhetoric might be in societies that construe the relations between public and private in very different terms. The ethnographic application of rhetoric to non-Western societies places rhetoric in a new set of discursive and social relationships. Such a process implies a dissolution of rhetoric (in its familiar guises) and its reassemblage in another context. In this way, the study of rhetoric in, say, Koya marriage negotiations (to borrow an example from this volume) has implications not only for the anthropologist's understanding of marriage but also, potentially, for the rhetorician's understanding of rhetoric.

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The point of departure of this chapter is the intuition of a recurring structure in Lévi-Strauss's works and the realization of a correlation between this structure and the rhetorical figure of chiasmus. Why does Lévi-Strauss so often resort to chiastic thinking and what is the broader significance of this figure of thought? To answer these questions, I will begin by following the trace of this figure of thought in Lévi-Strauss's works. In doing so, I will try to show that the figure of chiasmus plays a key role in shaping Lévi-Strauss's conception of the anthropologist's relationship to his object of study and, by extension, of the process of anthropological understanding.

I should make clear from the start that I will be concerned with chiasmus not merely as a figure of speech or style as such—that is, not simply as a rhetorical figure in the classical sense. Rather, I will be concerned with chiasmus as a pattern of thought, an organizing schema, a structure that determines, from behind the scenes, the form and content of a number of Lévi-Strauss's anthropological theories. To use the vocabulary of classical rhetoric, I will be concerned with chiastic reversals not only as a feature of *elocutio,* the part of rhetoric that studies the choice and arrangement of words (where chiasmus normally belongs), but as a feature of *dipositio,* the arrangement of the parts of an argument, and above all *inventio,* the invention of subject matter and the logical arguments that give form to it.

The rhetorical figure of chiasmus, as a figure of style, was named after the Greek letter *chi,* or *X* ,i.e., a cross. It is essentially a type of inversion. A

useful definition is provided by John Welch in his preface to a collection of essays that examines the uses of chiasmus in antiquity: "The basic figure of chiasm simply involves the reversal of the order of words in balancing clauses or phrases" (Welch 1981: 7). An example is Ovid's description of the Goddess Cardea: "Her power is to open what is shut; to shut what is open" (cited in Paul 1992). Welch, in *Chiasmus in Antiquity,* cites Pope's "A wit with dunces, and a dunce with wits" and Coleridge's "Flowers are lovely, love is flowerlike." A more modern example is what the French erotic novelist Alina Reyes says about writing: "I have always written to say that I am in love. In my notebooks … in my letters, in all my short texts, in my novels. … To the point that I am no longer sure whether I write so as to love better or love so as to write better" (Reyes 1993: 63; my transl.).

The basic structure of a chiastic inversion is: ABBA. However, scholars today accept the existence of more complex forms of chiasm that can extend over many pages of prose or verse. Such forms of chiastic reversals cannot be defined in terms of a simple grammatical inversion of the kind exemplified above. In ancient texts, these more complex chiasms are supposed to have had a mnemonic function or to have played a role similar to that of punctuation in texts in which punctuation was not yet used—for example, to signal a conclusion (Welch 1981: 12). The bible, in particular, makes much use of an extended version of the ABBA structure, in the form of lists that conform to sequences of the following kind: A-B-C-D-E-E′-D′-C′-B′-A′ (Welch 1981: 7). The key features of chiasmus—whatever the level of organization of a discourse where it occurs—are inversion, balance, and a certain foregrounding of the center point around which the system inverts. Chiasmus consists in "the appearance of a two-part structure or system in which the second half is a mirror image of the first, i.e. where the first term recurs last, and the last first" (Welch 1981: 10). On this basis, I propose to use the term *chiasmus* here to denote, in Lévi-Strauss's works, a form of inverted parallelism or inverted symmetry, an antithetical relationship between two terms so that each offers an inverted mirror image of the other. It is this figure of thought that I am suggesting is characteristic of a certain kind of Lévi-Straussian argument—its thematic structure, its way of unfolding—one whose deeper significance I will try to interpret here; my premise being that it has a significance or function and that it is not merely decorative or rhetorical, in a pejorative sense.

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A good example of a chiastic inversion of this kind is to be found in one of Lévi-Strauss's best known texts, the "Ouverture" to the *Mythologiques,* his tetralogy on Amerindian mythology. In Lévi-Strauss's thought anthropology and aesthetics constantly intertwine, which explains why the "Ouverture'" is as

much a meditation on the interrelation between different art forms as it is an introduction to the methods of the structural analysis of myths. More specifically, what Lévi-Strauss's sketches out in the "Ouverture" is something like a typology of art forms, one of the aims of which is to establish the close affinity that exists between myth and music and to contrast these art forms with others such as painting. Myth and music on one side, painting, sculpture, poetry on the other. And the means of this division is the special logic of chiasmus.

All art forms, for Lévi-Strauss, may be seen as kinds of languages, which for him means that, like natural languages which combine phonemes and morphemes into higher-order structures such as sentences, they articulate two systems. They possess primary-level units, the equivalent of phonemes, which are integrated into higher-order structures. In the case of music, for example, the primary-level units are the notes of the scale. In the case of myths, they are the series of events, real or imagined, that will make up the plot. For painting, it is color and shape.

It is here that chiasmus comes into play. For what fundamentally distinguishes, according to Lévi-Strauss, music (and myth) from painting is that painting derives its primary-level units from nature, whereas the primary-level units used by music are cultural artefacts. Musical scales—which are different for different cultures—are man-made, as indeed are the musical instruments that are used to play music. The result is the symmetrical but inverse relationship that each kind of art form entertains with nature. In Lévi-Strauss's own words:

> Painting, through the instrumentality of culture, gives intellectual organisation to a form of nature which it was already aware of as a sense pattern. Music follows exactly the opposite course: culture is already present in it, but in the form of sense experience, even before it organizes it intellectually by means of nature. (Lévi-Strauss 1994: 22).

Music is a cultural invention (it is pure artifice), but is given body (brought into existence) as nature (sensible reality). In other words music is not sound, it becomes sound. As Borges, paraphrasing Schopenhauer, put it in "A History of Tango": "music does not need the world to exist" (Borges 2001: 397). Conversely, nature (sensible reality) is a given for painting, whose task is to use cultural codes (style) to reorganize it (transform it into an artefact). In other words, and to sum up the chiastic structure of the argument: music is "naturalized" culture whereas painting is "culturalized" nature.

Lévi-Strauss further develops this classificatory system to include two other art forms: Chinese calligraphic art, and so-called "concrete" music. The effect is to add a further chiastic reversal to the original system. For, according to Lévi-Strauss's schema, Chinese calligraphic art is not a form of painting, as one might think, but rather comes into the same category as music, because

as in music, the primary-level units with which it creates—i.e., the system of ideograms—is a product of culture not nature. Conversely, concrete music—which rejects the musical scale created by culture and attempts to compose using elements of sound found in nature, i.e., noise—is in an ontologically similar situation to painting since, like painting, it creates its primary level of articulation out of elements found in nature. The end result is that what is normally seen as a form of painting is attached to the category of music and what is normally seen as music, to the category of painting.

Typically, Lévi-Strauss uses chiastic logic as a means of establishing typologies, of formalizing (and systematizing) the relationships between different objects, in particular when these objects appear to be different or distant, as with music and painting. In *The Story of Lynx,* Lévi-Strauss compares the role assigned to science and imaginative thinking in so-called primitive ("cold") societies and large-scale (historicized or "hot") societies.[3] Lévi-Strauss argues, in opposition to the theories of evolutionary anthropology, which order the history of humanity according to a fixed succession of evolutionary stages, that these two kinds of societies do not assign radically different roles to these two modes of thought. Both types of society establish the same relationship between science and imagination, says Lévi-Strauss, but for reasons that are the reverse of one another:

> It only seems to me that in societies without writing, positive knowledge fell well short of the power of the imagination, and it was the task of myths to fill this gap. Our own society finds itself in the inverse situation—one leading to the same results though for opposite reasons. With us, positive knowledge so greatly overflows our imaginative powers that our imagination, unable to apprehend the world that is revealed to it, has no other alternative than to turn to myth again. (Lévi-Strauss 1995: XII)

In "primitive" ("cold") societies, mythological speculation is called upon to supplement scientific knowledge because the powers of the imagination (in particular in as much as they provide an insight into the realm of the supra-sensible) are ahead of positive understanding. In "developed" ("hot") societies, mythical thought is required to fulfil the same function (to supplement science) but for the inverse reason: scientific knowledge has so outstripped the powers of the imagination that contemporary scientific discoveries—that an electron pulses seven million billion times a second, that it is at once a wave and a point (Lévi-Strauss 1995: XII)—are in effect incomprehensible to the layman except in the form of a myth (for the vast majority the story of the big-bang is, in effect, a myth of Creation).

Chiastic logic here is the means of a reconciliation between "cold" and "hot" societies. The former are no longer considered to belong to an earlier,

"pre-scientific" stage in an evolutionary process which invariably leads to the latter. Rather both kinds of societies reflect one another, but in such a way that "cold" societies provide a kind of inverted mirror image of "hot" societies. The Lévi-Straussian message, here, is that what separates "hot" and "cold" societies is not time, or history, but a synchronic system of symmetrical relationships of correlation and opposition.

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Chiastic logic also plays an important part in the theory of ritual that Lévi-Strauss develops in *The Savage Mind* (it is worth noting that this is a very different theory to the one he later develops in *The Naked Man*). He construes the nature and function of a ritual essentially as an inverted game. He takes the specific example of funerary rituals, such as those celebrated by the Fox Indians, whose function is to regulate the relationship between the living and the dead after the social disruption caused by a death. In what sense are these rituals inverted games?

The Fox perform "adoption" rituals whose aim is to ensure the departure of a dead person from the land of the living and his "adoption" into the world of the dead. Such rituals often incorporate contests which oppose two camps, one represents the living, the other the dead. However, unlike the games that are played in "hot" societies, the outcome of these ritual contests is predetermined: the dead must always win. According to the principles of reciprocity and gift exchange, by granting the dead a final victory—and, in a sense, letting them "kill" the living by defeating them—the dead become indebted to the living and, henceforth, must be grateful to them. In this way, the ritual ensures that, in the future, dead ancestors will fulfil the role that society gives them, namely, to protect the living and bring them wealth.

A game, because of its rules and conventions, may be described as a structure. An essential principle of every game is that the rules are the same for everyone; in other words, says Lévi-Strauss, the starting point of every game is symmetry. The aim of a game is to engender asymmetry: it produces a winner. This "asymmetry" is the product of nonstructural factors: individual skill or talent, chance, accident, in any case, an "event." Conversely, what gives rise to a funerary ritual of the kind described above is a death that brings about an asymmetrical relationship between the living and the dead, the sacred and the profane. The purpose of the ritual is to perform a series of preordained "actions" (which are different from the "actions" or events that make up a game; since they are predetermined they constitute an integral part of its structure), and thereby ensure that all the participants to the ritual end up being "winners"—at least in the sense that the social imbalance/disruption that gave rise to the ritual is morally remedied or compensated for. When the Gahuku-Gama

from New-Guinea were taught to play football, they devised a tournament in which they played as many games as was necessary for both sides to draw. In doing so, Lévi-Strauss comments, they were treating a game as if it were a ritual.

Seen in this light, the nature and function of a ritual is the reverse of that of a game, hence the chiastic system of correlations and oppositions that link, in the theory developed in *The Savage Mind,* these two forms of social interaction. In Lévi-Strauss's own words:

> Games … appear to have a *disjunctive* effect: they end in the establishment of a difference between individual players or teams where originally there was no indication of inequality. And at the end of the game they are distinguished into winners and losers. Ritual, on the other hand, is the exact inverse; it *conjoins,* for it brings about a union (one might even say communion in this context) or in any case an organic relation between two initially separate groups. … The game produces events by means of a structure; and we can therefore understand why competitive games should flourish in our industrial societies. Rites and myths, on the other hand, like 'bricolage' … take to pieces and reconstruct sets of events … and use them as so many indestructible pieces for structural patterns. (Lévi-Strauss 1966: 32–33)

In other words, and to spell out the chiastic structure of Lévi-Strauss's argument: games use structures to create events (and generate asymmetry) while rituals use events to create structures (and generate symmetry).

There are many other examples of this kind of chiastic logic in Lévi-Strauss's works, which I do not have the space to examine here in detail. In a later article published in *L'Homme* Lévi-Strauss argued that: "Circumcision and the bestowal of the penis sheath sustain a relationship of inverted symmetry" (Lévi-Strauss 1988: 23). I could also have mentioned here Lévi-Strauss's interpretation of Caduveo facial paintings, whose chiastic structure, similar to that of the designs on playing cards (the comparison is Lévi-Strauss's), dislocate and rearrange the human face. Another example is to be found in his analysis of the relationships between the plastic element and semantic content of various kinds of Northwest Coast masks (Xwexwe, Swaihwe, and Dzonokwa). Treating these masks as elements of a total system (i.e., as variations of a single mask), he shows that the relationship between each type of mask is such that as we pass from one to the other, if the form of the masks remains the same (for example, both masks favor concave shapes) their "message" is inverted (one mask is propitious, the other disruptive). Conversely, if their forms invert (one is concave, the other convex) it is, this time, their "message" that remains constant.

One is here touching on a crucial insight into the role of chiasmus construed as a creative principle. It is further born out in Lévi-Strauss's analysis,

in *Look Listen Read* (1993; 1997), of Poussin's famous painting *The Arcadian Shepherds.* Lévi-Strauss sees this painting as a transformation of an earlier painting on the same theme by Guercino. Lévi-Strauss identifies three paintings (two by Poussin, one by Guercino) that correspond to three stages in a sequence of transformations in the course of which Guercino's original composition is gradually assimilated by Poussin and reorganized, according to the logic of chiastic inversion, to be reborn as Poussin's *The Arcadian Shepherds.* That the figure of chiasmus constitutes a key to an elemental genetic principle is also what one may conclude from Lévi-Strauss's famous canonical formula of mythical creation—also chiastic—and its recent "morphogenetic" applications (see Maranda, ed. 2001).

The examples that precede show that the figure of chiasmus, or at least a logical structure analogous to it, is a distinctive feature of Lévi-Strauss's works, a stylistic particularity of his way of thinking and constructing arguments. What is the underlying significance of this figure of thought and the reason for its recurrence? There are no easy answers to these questions. They relate to Lévi-Strauss's particular way of conceptualizing problems and to his creativity as a writer (as Anthony Paul has shown regarding Shakespeare (Paul 1992), certain writers seem to have a natural predilection for the chiastic form). One of the recurring ideas in Lévi-Strauss's works that corresponds to this rhetorical figure is that two seemingly disparate objects (myth and music, "primitive" societies and "developed" societies, games and rituals, a painting by Guercino and another by Poussin) are in fact connected in such a way that one may pass from the one to the other by the means of a logical inversion. Chiastic logic, in this respect, fulfils a reconciliatory function; it is a means of bridging seemingly insurmountable differences, of integrating heterogeneous elements into a single unifying system (in Shakespeare's comedies, the chiastic switching of identities of symmetrical pairs of characters, often lovers, provides a principle of narrative closure). There is, however, another possible explanation of Lévi-Strauss's recurrent use of this figure of thought.

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My reading is that, at the level of the imaginary, Lévi-Strauss construes anthropology itself—the process of anthropological understanding—in terms of a figure of chiastic inversion. In the Lévi-Straussian paradigm, the anthropological journey, real or in the mind, is construed in terms of a switching of positions of self and other. This is something that is revealed not so much in Lévi-Strauss's explicit formulations about the nature of the ethnographic journey but, indirectly, through what he writes about Amerindian myths and what they have to say about the nature of travel (one may, as it were, view anthropology mytho-poetically). As we shall see, however, Lévi-Strauss draws

diverging implications from the chiastic nature of the ethnographic journey. In one sense, chiastic logic traps the anthropologist in a paradox. However, this paradox is a false one, as becomes apparent when one adopts a dynamic and generative view of chiasmus, one that brings out its full epistemological value.

One of Lévi-Strauss's major contributions to contemporary thought is his theory of the genesis of primitive myths. Lévi-Strauss's basic hypothesis is that myths (oral myths) come into being by a process of transformation of one myth into another. Lévi-Strauss's role, as mythographer, is to decipher the hidden logic that explains the transformation of one element in one myth into another element in another. For example, how malicious grandfathers become helpful grandmothers; how a woman who is a frog in one South American myth, in another North American myth becomes a torso affixed to her husband's back, starving him to death by stealing his food. Lévi-Strauss explains this last transformation in terms of the conversion of metaphor into metonymy (see *Mythologiques,* vol. III, "The Mystery of the Woman Cut into Pieces").

The myths that are linked in a series of transformations are treated as forming a cognate group. Each myth in the group, however dissimilar it appears to be from other myths in the group, is related to a common armature, a logico-sensible schema that is like the matrix of that transformational series. The matrix itself doesn't have a concrete existence. It is hypothesized by the mythographer, a posteriori, and derives its legitimacy from its ability to link together the many myths in a transformational series. It is, as Lévi-Strauss puts it, the virtual chessboard on which the myths of a given transformational group play out their respective games.[4]

One such transformational group is made up of a series of myths that all incorporate the story of a journey, made in a canoe, by a married couple consisting of the moon and the sun (see *Mythologiques,* vol. III, "The Canoe Journey of the Moon and the Sun"). The canoe and its journey are the key to the logical matrix underlying this particular series of myths. The canoe, according to Lévi-Strauss's analyses, is at once a real canoe and a logical operator (Stephen Tyler might have said a "thought picture") that can be positioned along the horizontal axis of the mythical journey in one of three basic positions: far, near, or intermediary. Each myth of the transformational group chooses a different point along this scale, thereby realizing one of the possible variants allowed by the matrix. In other words, some myths relate to the departure from the pole of the near, others to the journey itself and a third kind to the arrival at the pole of the far. The key to the schema as a whole is that as one travels from one pole of the continuum to the other—as one passes from the "near" to the "far," or vice-versa—the values associated with that pole inverse. The schema, as Lévi-Strauss describes it, is none other than a geometrical representation of

a chiastic inversion, a conversion into special terms of the grammatical inversion that characterizes the rhetorical figure. How is this?

The matrix of the canoe journey may be given a number of different significances; it is a logical schema, a tool, that can be used by different populations to encode different kinds of human concerns. As such, it provides a key to how the Amerindians conceptualize travel, and, beyond that, how they use the metaphor of travel—and the idea of distance—to conceptualize a range of other problems, including cosmological and sociological ones. It is also a key to Lévi-Strauss's own conception of the ethnographic journey.

Although a single individual can operate the long and narrow canoes used by the American Indians, ideally, they require a minimum of two passengers: at the front the stroke, whose action keeps the boat moving, at the back, the steersman who directs it. The canoe is constructed in such a way that, once in place, neither passenger can get up or move without threatening to overturn it. They are seated at a fixed distance from one another in an unalterable relationship of interdependence. It is this special feature of the canoe that is the key to the mythological use of this motif.

Life in the canoe—that is, when the canoe is at the midpoint in its journey between the poles of the near and the far—represents a cosmological and a marital ideal whereby husband and wife, moon and sun, are placed at exactly the right distance from one another. They are neither too far nor too close and therefore guarantee, on the one hand, the proper alternation of night and day (compared to such states as eternal night or eternal day, which existed in earlier times), and on the other, marital concord.

Lévi-Strauss points out that in Amerindian thought, nighttime is construed as a disjunction between the sky and the earth and daytime as a conjunction of the sky and the earth. At the level of its logical armature, the function of the canoe paradigm, Lévi-Strauss argues, is to keep "conjunction" and "disjunction" themselves at the right distance from one another. This is what happens when the canoe is positioned at the midpoint in its journey.

However, as the journey progresses and time goes by, the situation of the canoe and its passengers changes. And it changes according to the logic of chiastic reversal. As Lévi-Strauss writes:

> At the moment of departure, the canoe is so near the bank that the 'near' distance is virtually nil; on the other hand, the unforeseen risks of the expedition make the 'far' distance virtually infinite. But once the journey has begun, with every day that passes *the near recedes and the far draws nearer.* By the time the canoe arrives at its destination, the initial values of the two terms have been reversed. (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 192, my italics)

If, at midpoint in the canoe's journey, day and night, "conjunction" and "disjunction," are kept at the right distance from one another, when the canoe reaches the pole associated with the "far," "disjunction" has increased to the point of becoming absolute. Myths that play out their games at this end of the virtual pole of the transformational series, tell the story of a total divorce between light and darkness, resulting in either eternal day or eternal night. All forms of natural phenomena that temper the opposition between absolute lightness and absolute darkness are abolished: moon and starlight, the Milky Way, rainbows, the shadow of clouds all disappear (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 112–13). At the pole of disjunction, the pole of the far, the possibility of mediating between night and day, light and dark, is lost. And the result, according to mythical thought, is a world that has become literally rotten. Differences become absolute and can no longer be overcome. In terms of the marital code contained in Amerindian myths, this pole corresponds to marriages contracted with excessively distant spouses, those chosen beyond the limits of exogamy, among enemy populations or even the animal kingdom.

Conversely, when the canoe is at the pole associated with the near, it is "conjunction" that is at its greatest. At this pole of the canoe's journey, myths tell stories that thematically inverse those outlined above. These are stories about the merging of night and day and the abolition of the myriad distinctions that make daily life possible. Here, it is not the divorce between the sun and the moon that threatens the world but their excessively close relationship, resulting in such phenomena as eclipses, a symbol for the abolition of the opposition between the distant and the near. Here, mediation becomes hypermediation and differences are abolished. The result is not a rotten world, but a burnt world. In terms of the marital codes, this pole corresponds to the sociological threat of excessively close—i.e., incestuous—marriages.

What have these mythological themes got to do with the problem of the significance of the figure of chiasmus in Lévi-Strauss's thought? Lévi-Strauss's mythemes are overdetermined. They relate back not only to their sources in Amerindian thought, but also to their sources in Lévi-Strauss's thought. The paradigm of the canoe journey, as described by Lévi-Strauss, may be read as an allegory of Lévi-Strauss's own conception of the ethnographic journey and its chiastic structure. Lévi-Strauss's anthropological theory of myth is also a mythological theory of anthropology. This becomes apparent when one reveals the hidden intertextual connections that link the above analysis of the canoe paradigm in Amerindian mythology to a passage in Lévi-Strauss's autobiographical account of his first field experiences, *Tristes Tropiques* (Lévi-Strauss 1955: 386–98), a book published some thirteen years before the above analysis of "canoe" mythology. The schema of the canoe journey, its mythopoetic theorization of the concept of distance in terms of a chiastic inversion of

the poles of the near and the far, "conjunction" and "disjunction," correspond, point by point, to Lévi-Strauss's conception of the nature of the ethnographic journey—more specifically, its paradoxical nature—such as it is theorized in the *Tristes Tropiques* passage that I have just mentioned. Said differently, the canoe journey is a spatial model of the dialectic of identity and difference.

During his second ethnographic field trip, which took place in 1938, Lévi-Strauss devoted most of his time (around four months) to the study of the Nambikwara Indians, an indigenous population of the Matto Grosso region of Brazil. However, following his work with Nambikwara, his expedition continued toward the north and eventually made contact with another ethnic group, the Mundé, which, at the time, was virtually unknown to anthropologists. Instead of using the mules and oxes that constituted their normal mode of transport, this time, and for the very first time, Lévi-Strauss and his expedition traveled by canoe. Indeed, the first of the two chapters devoted to his encounter with the Mundé is entitled "A Canoe Trip." And various clues in these chapters suggest that this journey, for Lévi-Strauss, had the value of a journey to the pole of the far, to the furthest point of exoticism.

The expedition was fated to be a disillusioning one. Lévi-Strauss and his expedition, due to a lack of time before their departure, had been unable to learn the language spoken by the Mundé. So when Lévi-Strauss finally came into contact with them, they were unable to communicate. Lévi-Strauss recorded what he could about this virtually unknown population, but left disappointed. Nevertheless, the experience was not lost on Lévi-Strauss who, reflecting upon it later, was led to speculate more generally about the nature of the ethnographic journey and the conditions under which a specifically anthropological form of understanding is possible.

The problem that the Mundé experience brought to the fore was the problem of what Victor Segalen, in his *Essay on Exoticism,* calls "the perception of Diversity," and which he describes as "the sensation of Exoticism, which is none other than the notion of difference, … the knowledge that something is other than one's self; . . . Exoticism's power is nothing other than the ability to conceive otherwise." (Segalen 2002: 19)

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How does the anthropologist apprehend and comprehend—and, as a writer, describe—what is "different" or "other," and what does it mean to be engaged in such a project? The question is a fundamental one for Lévi-Strauss, who explicitly rejects any definition of anthropology in terms of a special object of study, such as "primitive" societies, and explains the specificity of anthropology in terms of its distinctive epistemological approach, which is to always "see from afar." For Lévi-Strauss, the principle tool of anthropological

understanding is distance itself. The anthropologist—the "astronomer of the social sciences," as he once put it (Lévi-Strauss 1950: LI)—gains access to the significance of what he observes precisely because his point of view is always a distant one.

The Mundé experience taught Lévi-Strauss—or at least the Lévi-Strauss of *Tristes Tropiques*—that anthropology, conceived of in these terms, harbors a paradox. Here, Lévi-Strauss, gives voice to his pessimism. His conclusions should be read in the skeptical tradition of essay writing epitomized by Montaigne, famously unable to answer the question: "Que sais-je?" Here, Lévi-Strauss opts for a radical questioning of his motives for becoming an anthropologist, the value of what he has learned from his travels, and the legitimacy of his profession as a whole:

> I had wanted to reach the extreme limits of the savage; it might be thought that my wish had been granted, now that I found myself among these charming Indians whom no other white man had ever seen before and who might never be seen again. After an enchanting trip up-river, I had certainly found my savages. Alas! They were only too savage. Since their existence had only been revealed to me at the last moment, I was unable to devote to them the time that would have been essential to get to know them. … There they were, all ready to teach me their customs and beliefs, and I did not know their language. They were as close to me as a reflection in a mirror; I could touch them, but I could not understand them. I had been given, at one and the same time, my reward and my punishment. Was it not my mistake, and the mistake of my profession, to believe that men are not always men and that some are more deserving of interest and attention because they astonish us by the colour of their skin and their customs? (Lévi-Strauss 1973: 333)

And Lévi-Strauss concludes, formulating the essential paradox that he places at the heart of anthropology:

> I had only to succeed in guessing what they were like for them to be deprived of their strangeness: in which case, I might just as well have stayed in my village. Or if, as was the case here, they retained their strangeness, I could make no use of it, since I was incapable of even grasping what it consisted of. Between these two extremes, what ambiguous instances provide us with the excuses by which we live? (Lévi-Strauss 1973: 333)

It is this fundamental paradox that, with hindsight, we can see is also encoded in the canoe paradigm used in Amerindian mythology. The mythological story of the journey of the moon and the sun expresses not only Amerindian concerns about the nature of marriage or the alternation of night and day but also Lévi-Strauss's concerns about the nature of anthropology itself.

One need not go so far, here, as to postulate an autobiographical source to the mytheme of the canoe journey analyzed by Lévi-Strauss in *The Origins of Table Manners.* Since myths are tools for analyzing problems, one may simply view this reading as another application (or transformation) of canoe mythology, here not in a cosmological but an anthropological "key."

As I have already indicated, the particularity of the Amerindian conception of travel is to see it in terms of a chiastic inversion of the poles of the far and the near: the far becomes near and the near, far. At the end of the journey, the values of each pole are reversed (at the same time, in a number of versions of the canoe myth, its occupants, the moon and the sun, switch position, so that by the end of the journey the latter is in front, in the position of the stroke, the former at the rear). It is this chiastic switching of positions—other becomes self, self other—that explains the paradox inherent in anthropology: if the other remains other, I have no way of understanding him/her; but if I understand him/her, he/she is no longer other. The poles of the "ethnographer's paradox" correspond to the poles of the journey of the moon and the sun. For the ethnographer, the problem of the relationship between self (near) and other (far) is also that of how to mediate between "excessive conjunction" and "excessive disjunction." His/her problem is not: what is the right distance to establish between man and wife in order to ensure the proper functioning of the institution of marriage? but: what is the right distance to establish between self and other in order to ensure the proper functioning of the institution of anthropology?

At one end of the continuum of the journey of ethnographic understanding—the pole that corresponds to the mythological pole of the total divorce between night and day, light and dark—what is abolished is the possibility of mediation between self and other. This is the pole of "disjunction," symbolized by the Mundé experience, where the illusion of otherness is maintained, but so perfectly that no exchange is possible. In Amerindian myths, the elements that disappear at this end of the journey, to be replaced by eternal night or eternal day, are all forms of tempered light, such as rainbows or moonlight.

Conversely, at the other end of the continuum, at the pole of the close, the pole of incest, the pole where the earth burns, what threatens ethnographic understanding is an excessive "conjunction" between self and other. What is abolished here is the opposition between far and near. Differences are reduced to sameness and, in terms of the ethnographer's paradox, the other becomes another self.

If I understand what makes the Mundé other, they are no longer other, and the whole ethnographic journey appears to be futile. Conversely, if they retain their otherness, I have no way of understanding them and again, the ethnographic experience is rendered null and void. In the equation that relates

the journey of ethnographic understanding to the journey of the moon and the sun, the canoe—i.e., the mediating term between near and far, self and other—is language. And the problem evoked by the ethnographer's paradox is essentially that of the use of language as a means of understanding distant cultures. The pole of "disjunction" is the pole of interrupted communication, where translation is impossible, that of "conjunction" of an excessive communication that reduces all languages to one language, through a kind of hyper-translation. The dilemma here is the one raised by the myth of Babel.

From the pessimistic vantage point that characterizes *Tristes Tropiques,* the chiastic switching of positions of the near and the far that occurs in the journey of ethnographic understanding is revealed to harbor a paradox that undermines anthropology. The ethnographic project—to understand the other as other—appears as an impossibility. Standing in the Brazilian rain forest, Lévi-Strauss tries to identify the source of the strangeness of the virgin land that surrounds him. "I can pick out certain scenes and seperate them from the rest; is it this tree, this flower? They might well be elsewhere" (Lévi-Strauss 1973: 334). He restricts his vision to the smallest possible detail, the blade of grass at his feet, and then imagines a succession of increasingly distant points of view, each of which place the blade of grass (and him) in a larger context. His conclusion: the same blade of grass might well have been surrounded by the woods of the Paris suburb of Meudon.

One cannot help but feel that there is something reductionist about the paradox in which Lévi-Strauss traps the anthropologist in *Tristes Tropiques.* It is revealing that the pessimistic conclusions reached in this work did not halt Lévi-Strauss in his anthropological project. One may perhaps differentiate between a static and a dynamic use of chiasmus. In 1995, Boyzone proclaimed in redundant unison: "love me for a reason, let the reason be love." Rhetoric, as Plato knew very well, has good and bad uses. The paradox enunciated in *Tristes Tropiques* unnecessarily encloses anthropological understanding in a logical circle. But elsewhere in his works, the same chiastic inversion is given a very different value. There, Lévi-Strauss reveals the productivity of chiastic logic.

Because the Mundé experience was an extreme one—bipolar, one might say, borrowing the terminology of psychoanalysis—the general theory that Lévi-Strauss derives from it is accordingly couched in terms that are unhelpfully dualistic ("black" or "white"). Anthropology only appears to be an impossible task when theorized in terms of the two polar situations hypothesized by the paradox: absolute otherness or absolute sameness. However, ordinarily, the ethnographer does speak the other's language, and mediation is possible. Here, as with the journey of the moon and the sun, there is a third position between the two polar extremes, a midpoint in the anthropologist's journey

where self and other—like the moon and the sun when day alternates regularly with night—are at the right distance from one another to be able to engage in a meaningful exchange. This "midpoint"—that of a "tempered" anthropology—is not evoked in the pessimistic passage from *Tristes Tropiques.* What the *Tristes Tropiques* meditation elides from the ethnographic journey is the dimension of time. The ethnographic conversion of "other" into "self" and "self" into "other" is a process, one that implies a gradual transformation which, even if it is ultimately circular (assimilation, in reality, is never total), is nevertheless a source of understanding and knowledge. The return to the point of departure—self-other; other-self—is not a return to the same. The point of departure has been modified.

In later works, Lévi-Strauss will come to see the chiastic switching of positions of self and other, far and close, on the contrary, as the basis of the constitution of a specifically anthropological form of understanding and hence as one of the principle epistemological tools of anthropology. This is arguably best illustrated in the "Ouverture" to the *Mythologiques,* which develops a theory of anthropology as translation. Here, the anthropologist's discourse is not made to stand in opposition to the discourse of alterity (mythical discourse). On the contrary, the anthropologist becomes a kind of "receiver" for an anonymous voice that is deployed in and through him. In a world in which myths think themselves in the mythographer unbeknown to him, self and other, subjectivity and objectivity, become mutually imbricated, which is not to say that they are confused or assimilated to one another. Here, anthropology becomes a "supreme form of mental gymnastics" (Lévi-Strauss 1994: 11) in which the systems of representation of other cultures are translated in terms of the anthropologist's own and vice versa. The product of this translation process is a general anatomy of "objectified" thought. The paralyzing paradox of *Tristes Tropiques* has vanished and has been replaced by its productive, dynamic counterpart. In Lévi-Strauss's own words: "If the final aim of anthropology is to contribute to a better knowledge of objectified thought and its mechanisms, it is in the last resort immaterial whether in this book the thought processes of South American Indians take shape through the medium of my thought, or whether mine take place through the medium of theirs" (Lévi-Strauss 1994: 13).

This is not all. Lévi-Strauss identifies "distance" as the anthropologist's principle tool of understanding: it enables the anthropologist, an outsider to the culture that he/she studies to see what remains hidden to those, too close, who are active participants in that culture and who experience rather than observe, live rather than interpret (distance provides access to an "unconscious" dimension of another cultures). Neither too close nor too far, the anthropologist is between cultures: his/her point of view is comparative. And,

in the Lévi-Straussian scheme of things, at least, by observing the differences that distinguish one culture from another one is able to bring to light the hidden features, fewer in number, that are common to all cultures (which is what Lévi-Strauss does, for example, when he shows that the many different types of kinship systems observed by anthropologists are reducible to a small number of recurring elementary structures of exchange).

But more significantly still in the present context, the chiastic switching of positions between self and other is, when viewed positively, a source of knowledge not only about others but about the self. Two symmetrical processes take place during the journey of ethnographic understanding. On the one hand, as the far gets closer, the other, through a process of identification, becomes assimilated to the self. This requires that the anthropologist transforms himself/herself, and his/her understanding of the nature of this transformation is a source of positive knowledge about the other. But, at the same time, the inverse process also takes place, that is, what was once near, becomes distant. The understanding of the other requires a decentering (distanciation) of the self.

It is this final reversal, whereby the anthropologist comes to see and apprehend his/her own culture from the point of view of the distant other—as if he/she were foreign to it—that, I propose, constitutes the original figure of chiastic inversion from which the other figures of inversion that I have evoked so far may be seen to derive. Because the story of this inversion—of how the far becomes near, and, as a result, the near far—is one of the fundamental stories that Lévi-Strauss's works tell, one of the grand narratives of structural anthropology.

Notes

1. This chapter constitutes a modified version of "Claude Lévi-Strauss, Chiasmus and the Ethnographic Journey," *Arachnofiles* 2 (2001).
2. The way in which this new form of trial by jury came about has special contemporary relevance. It arose out of the need to deal with the numerous land disputes that resulted from the overthrowing of two Sicilian tyrants (Gelon and Hieron) who had expropriated and deported large numbers of people, in part to pay for their mercenary armies, in part to populate Syracuse.
3. The distinction between "hot" and "cold" societies has been much discussed and often misunderstood. The key point is that the metaphor was never meant to differentiate societies that are "in" history from others that somehow exist "outside" of history, as Lévi-Strauss makes amply clear as early as 1952 in "Race and History" (later published in *Structural Anthropology,* vol. 2). The metaphor relates to systems of *representation*, and differentiates those societies that have adopted an essentially progressive (linear) conception of time (an ideology of "progress") and those whose institutions aim to cancel out, as much as possible, the effects of historical change, while being aware that

they can never be entirely successful in the pursuit of this goal. Their ideal model of social order (reality might be quite different) is homeostatic as opposed to thermodynamic. They attempt to conserve the same small amount of energy rather than maximize its production and hence, also, that of entropy.

4. I have argued elsewhere that Lévi-Strauss is the coauthor of the mythical transformations that he describes and analyzes in the *Mythologiques.* The act of mythical exegesis requires an act of personal—and unconscious—creation. See my *Lévi-Strauss, Anthropology and Aesthetics* (Cambridge, 2007).

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CHAPTER 7

When Fair Is Foul and Foul Is Fair

Lessons from *Macbeth*

Anthony Paul

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Shakespeare's interest in the ways that rhetorical discourse and culture interact is expressed in his countless references to the similarity between living and acting, and in his fascination with the figures of the actor, the hypocrite, and the king, the man most conspicuously called upon to perform a part in the drama of life. The comparison of the world with the stage is of course an ancient one, and one that runs through all of English Renaissance drama from the mid-sixteenth century to 1642, the year the theaters were closed down, not to reopen until 1660. But it is a trope that we associate above all with Shakespeare, and with good reason.[1] Traditionally, the comparison expresses life's vanity, the essential unreality of earthly things, and something of the old, medieval, heaven-centered worldview is retained in Shakespeare's best known formulations of the metaphor, the "All the world's a stage" speech delivered by the melancholy Jaques in *As You Like It,* and Macbeth's bleak summary of existence in his lines, as dismissive of the stage as they are of life:

> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more.

There is, however, a difference: medieval comments on life as an unreal show were always extra-dramatic; Shakespeare's are made within the framework of the drama, and spoken by vividly imagined stage personae, so they open up for the audience potential dimensions of reality rather than shutting the world off and turning away from it.

Furthermore, for Shakespeare, who straddles the medieval and the modern, feudalism and capitalism, the trope is reversible. If the world is a place of performance where people act out their various parts, so is the theater a world, a place of extraordinary liberty and possibility where identities can be put on and taken off, men can become women and these women can pretend to be men, and kings are put on show, for the delight and instruction of the audience. In the wooden ○ of the Elizabethan public theaters, the spectators were in a close and delicate relation with the drama, neither themselves part of it, like medieval audiences, nor entirely separate, but held in an "equilibrium of involvement and distance" (Righter 1962, 1967: 184) that was gradually lost after Shakespeare's death in 1616, with the decline of the public theaters and the increase of Baroque self-consciousness about the nature of illusion and spectacle.

The lively interaction of rhetoric and culture, life and performance, in Renaissance England is embodied in many ordinary English words, such as *act, play, part, scene,* and *perform,* which Shakespeare is fond of using, with or without a theatrical connotation and often playing with their ambiguity. The word *stage* itself could be ambiguous, since it also meant any sort of platform, including that on which executions were performed. In verses on the execution of King Charles I in 1649, Andrew Marvell stresses the theatrical nature of the occasion; he describes the King as "the royal actor" and reports that "He nothing common did, or mean/ Upon the memorable scene." Charles was a disastrous king who came to a disastrous end, yet carried it off as it were successfully, exerting a sort of authority, that of style and a good performance, even in the ultimate defeat of being publicly beheaded. Shakespeare's Macbeth, very much a failed monarch, contrasts with Charles in not putting up a good performance at any point; he becomes a bloody tyrant but never a convincing king. Like Charles, he is beheaded, but offstage, without the dignity of a death scene. The successful "royal actor" must be a master of rhetoric, but Macbeth is himself mastered by rhetoric: he exists within and dissolves into the play's world of discourse, and he and his destiny seem to be directed by verbal paradoxes and ambiguities beyond his understanding, let alone his control. These two kings—the real one, Charles, who turns himself into an actor for his final appearance on the stage, and the fictional one, Macbeth, played by an actor speaking a richly rhetorical text—exemplify two chiastically opposed rhetorical modes of operation: rhetoric consciously controlled and deployed to achieve a desired effect; and rhetoric as a shaping force behind culture and life, generally unseen and beyond individual control.

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Struck by the prominence of chiasmus in Shakespeare's *Macbeth,* a number of years ago I began to suspect that this particular rhetorical scheme, often

a leitmotif for Shakespeare but nowhere more strikingly than in this play, was surely doing more work here than it has traditionally been considered capable of doing: that it must be more than a matter of local and incidental rhetorical reinforcement. Chiasmus in *Macbeth,* coupled as it is from the outset with radical moral uncertainty, and with some of the play's most resonant and haunting passages, looked as if it might be a key to some of its inner meanings.

Close reading of *Macbeth* revealed chiasmus to be, indeed, an intrinsic constitutive component of this dramatic poem, one of Shakespeare's most concentrated and tightly organized works. The figure is at the heart of the tragedy's distinctive weight, density and intensity; not only constantly shaping its language—in particular that of the all-important hero-villain—and thereby also the unbearable predicament in which Macbeth and his Lady find themselves, but deeply inscribed into its overall structure and its meanings.

More recently, involvement in the Rhetoric Culture project has persuaded me to return to this material with an enlarged understanding of the ways that the powerful thrust of the chiastic twist (to borrow Tyler and Strecker's useful term) can generate meanings and also provide a key to such meanings, not only in literary texts but in life, individual and social. In what follows I shall link my comments on Shakespearean chiasmus with some tentative and provisional remarks on possible extraliterary implications and applications of chiasmus.

Surveying the figures of rhetoric in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), George Puttenham lays emphasis on the playful and ornamental possibilities of chiasmus: "Ye haue a figure which takes a couple of words to play with in a verse, and by making them to chaunge and shift one into others place they do very pretily exchange and shift the sence." The culture of Elizabethan England, as well as being intensely rhetorical, linguistically self-aware and conscious of life as performance, placed a high value on display and ingenuity, visual as well as verbal, on decorative and fantastical elaboration involving interwoven patterns and a highly worked surface, in, for instance, architecture, calligraphy, costume, arms, and armor, as well as in prose and verse. Shakespeare (1564–1616), especially during the first half of his writing career, delights in wit, glitter, dazzle, and intricate choreographic patterning of language and action; in such early, characteristically Elizabethan works as the comedy *Love's Labours Lost* and the narrative poem *The Rape of Lucrece,* there is much pretty exchange and shifting of sense, and rhetoric often functions more as a decorative encrustation of the text than a means of semantic or mimetic reinforcement.

For an example of Shakespeare's use of chiasmus for witty comic effect, and also of rhetorical self-consciousness, we can go to Feste, the jester, in *Twelfth Night:* who first gives a sample of his verbal skills (which, it must be admitted, has lost some of its salt since 1600) and then wittily congratulates himself on his own wit, "So thou mayst say the king lies by a beggar if a beggar dwell near

him, or the church stands by thy tabor if thy tabor stands by the church. … A sentence is but a cheverel glove to a good wit, how quickly the wrong side may be turned outward" (3.1. 7–12).

The first of Shakespeare's mature tragedies, *Hamlet,* written just after *Twelfth Night* in 1600–1601, also contains chiasmi that have a comic element and are on the face of it fairly trivial. Polonius, the pompous long-winded royal counsellor, is one of the characters in whom Shakespeare more or less satirically personifies a schoolmasterly sententiousness; he is fond of chiasmus and vain of his rhetorical powers, although they sometimes lead him into a scarcely coherent tangle, as when he proposes

> That we find out the cause of this effect,
> Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
> For this effect defective comes by cause.
> Thus it remains; and the remainder thus. …
> (2.2. 101–4)

That last line nicely demonstrates chiasmus's potential for pure redundancy. Polonius' chiastic flight begins just before this, when he says of Hamlet

> That he is mad, 'tis true, 'tis true 'tis pity,
> And pity 'tis 'tis true – a foolish figure –
> But farewell it, for I will use no art.
> (2.2. 97–9)

Like Feste, Polonius comments on his own rhetoric, then dismisses his "foolish figure," only to fall right back into it. Though the audience is likely to agree with Polonius that his chiasmus is foolish, there is more going on here than foolishness, and the verbal play is not as gratuitous as it is in the example from *Twelfth Night.* There is both a satirical and a dramatic point to it, as there is when the King and Queen greet the courtiers Rosencrantz and Guildenstern with

> K: Thanks Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern
> Q: Thanks Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz.

These lines can quite appropriately and successfully be played for a laugh. But this piece of ceremonious fatuity is endowed with meaning by its place in the complex body of the play. These chiasmi from *Hamlet* are iconic and they are continuous with the whole tissue of the play (to which chiasmus is almost as integral as it is to *Macbeth*) because the Danish court, the play's metaphor for the world, is a place of hollow forms, doubleness, insincere smiling appearances.

The gap between deeds and words, speaking and being, the essential problem of *homo rhetoricus* of which Shakespeare is acutely aware, is articulated in *Hamlet* by the villain, Claudius, who, like nearly all Shakespeare's villains,[2] is aware both of his villainy and the rhetorical skill that serves it

> The harlot's cheek, beautied with plast'ring art,
> Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
> Than is my deed to my most painted word.
> O heavy burden!
> (3.1. 51–3)

In *Macbeth* (1605–06) chiasmus is, on the level of dialogue, associated with contradiction, frustrated movement and mental entrapment, on the level of the whole action with large ironies and hidden symmetries (hidden in so far as the audience is unlikely to register them). I briefly survey the chiastic world of the tragedy in the opening paragraphs of the introduction to my study of the play:

> *The Tragedy of Macbeth* concerns the murder of a king with divine attributes by a man who himself becomes king and in due course is also killed. It is about a man who has no children who is killed by a man who was never properly born. It contains both 'black' magic, pledged to the service of evil, and 'white' magic, performed by a saintly king. … Almost everything in *Macbeth* has its counterpart, or implies, or contains, its opposite. … The play insists, at every structural level, on patterns of reversal and re-reversal, of contradiction and re-contradiction, and the identification or interchangeability of opposites, as in dreams, the co-presence, even within a single word, of opposed meanings. … Contradiction and its reversal, sometimes contained in a single word or phrase, in many cases spans the whole action: for instance, in 1.1. Macbeth is described as showing no mercy to the rebel Macdonwald, whom he 'unseams' and beheads; the epithet 'merciless' is however not applied to him but to the same Macdonwald; at the end of the play, on the other hand, Macbeth is called 'this dead butcher' (5, 9, 35), a parallel displacement of epithet, since what we, the audience, are now looking at is 'Macduff with Macbeth's head': Macbeth has been butchered and the (live) butcher is Macduff (Paul 1992: 1–2).

The most famous chiasmus in *Macbeth,* perhaps in world literature, is the line Shakespeare hits us with in the first moments of the play, the radical paradox "fair is foul and foul is fair," uttered by the three witches. It is, you could say, the ultimate conversation-stopper: a total, imbecilic inversion and subversion of meaning. It is a sentence of utter simplicity: everyone can understand the words; yet nobody could grasp the sense of the statement. It is at least as

baffling as the paradox of the Cretan liar. In my book I try to describe what these words are doing:

> The witches' line … involves a double antithesis and contradiction: in itself, it twice states the reversal of what are by definition axiomatic and fundamental truths; still, one might think that if the first half of the chiasmus is to be taken as a truth then the other can be read as being also, obviously and tautologously, true. However, since the first half can be taken as destroying the meaning of 'fair', that of 'foul' in the second half can no longer be unproblematic (since 'fair' no longer means anything, the second part of the line may be taken to mean 'evil, that is to say good (as we have just been informed) is good, that is to say (as we have just been informed) evil'. What happens when you reinforce a destruction? Double destruction? A chain reaction? Indeed, the line sets up a back-and-forth reverberation of reversals and counter-reversals of meaning which could go on indefinitely if you allowed it to: a form of semantic nuclear fission, perhaps. And it's all done with mirrors. The fundamental semantic instability of 'fair is foul and foul is fair' leads into a conceptual morass where no further movement is possible (Paul 1992: 35).

This morass, embodied in language of contradiction, evasion and entrapment, is Macbeth's inner hell. The witches set up the play's mental landscape, one of false choices, ambiguity and delusion, in which a healthy, firm, unequivocal reality is out of reach. The fundamental antinomies of good and bad, losing and winning, being and not being, a thing being done and not done, are in Macbeth constantly balanced against each other and confused with each other. It's impossible to tell them apart. "When the battle's lost and won" say the witches. "Nothing is but what is not" says Macbeth. Another chiasmus, of course.

Macbeth is a man in a mist, cut off from reality, morally adrift. The language of the play enacts this condition. The play is full of ambiguities, questions that are unanswered, and unanswerable, statements that are broken off, language that is blocked, that turns in on itself. For instance

> The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,
> Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.
> (1.4. 52–3)

or:

> Better be with the dead,
> Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
> Than on the torture of the mind to lie
> In restless ecstasy.
> (3.2. 19–22)

or:

> Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
> (3.2. 55)

"Fair is foul and foul is fair" is a peculiar case, an extreme case, yet this peculiarity also makes it exemplary. It is peculiar because it's not just a case of parallelism with reversal of the terms, but also one of contradiction of sense followed immediately by the inversion of that contradiction. So it demonstrates, intensely and compactly, certain potentialities of chiasmus.

In *Macbeth* chiasmus is a trap—mental, moral and existential. Over and over it embodies a disorienting and paralyzing blocked movement of the mind which is typical of Macbeth, both the play and the man. Just after he has committed the fateful act of killing the king, Macbeth says "I am afraid to think what I have done / Look on't again I dare not." This sentence is iconic of Macbeth's mental state. It begins and ends with fear, which is everywhere in the play; then there is "think" and "look," the things Macbeth would rather not do, but can't help doing, and which make his situation so unbearable for him; and the hinge or turning point of the chiasmus is "what I have done," the dreadful crime that he is so afraid to think of or look at that he is also afraid to name it. The witches describe their black magic cookery as "A deed without a name" (4.1. 49), but the true deed without a name is the murder of Duncan. Macbeth and his wife find many ways of not naming the murder, both before and after the deed is done. ("He that's coming must be provided for," "this night's great business," "this business," "this enterprise," "this terrible feat," "the deed," "this deed," "the horrid deed," "my deed," etc.).

Pervading the text, the play's flesh and blood, chiasmus is also built into its skeleton. The action of the play can be construed as not just one but a whole series of chiasmi. A particularly spectacular feature of the play's chiasticity—if something more or less hidden can be called spectacular—is the patterning of its deaths. The deaths in the play echo and re-echo each other chiastically in a whole range of different ways, and all of them are forms or aspects of Macbeth's own death, which ends the play and at the same time brings it round back to the beginning again. Together with *King Lear, Macbeth* represents Shakespeare's most sustained experiencing of the nature of death. There are nine moments of violent death in *Macbeth,* spread throughout the action rather than clustered together in a climactic catastrophe as they more commonly are in Shakespearean tragedy. They are: 1) the rebel Macdonwald, 2) the traitor Cawdor (whose name Macbeth inherits), 3) King Duncan, 4) Duncan's servants, 5) Banquo, 6) Lady Macduff and her son, 7) Lady Macbeth, 8) young Siward, and 9) Macbeth.

They take place thus:

Act 1	Act 2	Act 3	Act 4	Act 5
1, 2	3, 4	5	6	7, 8, 9

They fall into the following chiasmi:

A: 1, 2	B: 3–7	A: 8, 9
day	night	day
Public	domestic	public
battle	murder	battle
A: 1, 2	B: 3–6	A: 7–9
proper and necessary	wrongful and unnecessary	proper and necessary
Macbeth's own death[3]	Macbeth's murders[4]	Macbeth's own death

More complex chiasmi can also be traced. Each of Macbeth's murders (and Lady Macbeth's self-murder) kills a part of him: the killing of Duncan, the good king, is the destruction of his own soul. In any case, whichever schematic picture we choose, the first death is tied to the last: in the end Macbeth has become the man he himself killed at the beginning of the action (see Paul 1992: 54–67).

The fifth death in the play, that of Banquo, is the central death and the central murder, and takes place half-way through the play in the third of its five acts. It is a deeply black moment: Macbeth's murder of his comrade in arms and friend; but it is also the play's turning point, when it starts moving out of the dark toward the light. Banquo dies, but his son escapes, and his descendants will become kings of Scotland. So at the center of the tragedy and its unstable world we have the guarantee of stability and continuity, a son surviving his father. In other words, at the heart of what is most foul we find something fair, hope for the future. Life and death turn out to be inseparable and interdependent, and the deepest pit is where hope is born. Perhaps foul *is* fair, after all, in the long run.

A confusion/reversal of moral categories, often expressed chiastically, is ubiquitous in the drama, at all levels. The action begins, as it ends, with scenes of warfare and slaughter that the language Shakespeare employs may encourage us to read as brutal and barbaric, yet which the people in the play see quite

differently. In the second scene of the play Macbeth is described as carving his way through the enemy army, slicing the rebel leader in two "from the nave to the chops" and fixing his head upon the battlements. Delighted by this, King Duncan exclaims "O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman!" Numerous commentators, themselves ensnared in the unreliable ambiguity of rhetoric that is such a central issue in this tragedy, have debated whether Macbeth is to be seen as deserving this praise, that is, whether or not he is presented as a heroic warrior in the first scenes, or as a brute; is Duncan right to praise him, or is he making a grave mistake? And so on. Such arguments about interpretation are unending, failing as they do to engage with the moral confusion that pervades the language/world of the tragedy, including good King Duncan. Fair is foul, and a violent killer is a worthy gentleman.

This tragedy is set in a semibarbaric world moving clumsily from an epic collective society to one with individual responsibilities and more complex ideas of what it is to be a man—an issue intensely debated within the play. What makes Macbeth, the murderer and tyrant, a tragic hero is that he is the one who experiences to the full the contradictions of his world and the pain of the transitional moment the tragedy identifies. It is in Macbeth's agonized experience that the conflict between the barbaric and the civilized man is played out. In him, the primitive and the disorderly erupt in a violent excess of action for which he is punished, not, like King Claudius, with conscience and the sense of guilt, but with the more primary curse of the intolerable, unsleeping knowledge that he has put himself outside the human community. His death and beheading, in which the play's dark prophecies are fulfilled and lose their mystery, have the inevitability of ritual. His dying is a communal event; on the literal, political level it is the liberating death of a tyrant, when for a moment people may hope and believe that the future will be essentially different. "But Macbeth's experience not only enacts the old world and its rejection; it also contains the new world that is coming to birth. For it is to him, the childless anarch, that the vision of the bloody child[5] is vouchsafed; it is within the theatre of his consciousness that the whole process is enacted. Macbeth is the most exemplary of Shakespeare's tragic protagonists. For all the dense specificity of his imagined consciousness, he is of all Shakespearean heroes the one who comes closest to embodying a myth: that of an evolutionary transition" (Paul 1992: 101).

This underlying theme of the collision between a primitive and an advanced culture fascinates Shakespeare: Hamlet and Othello are variations on the theme. Hamlet, the skeptical Renaissance intellectual commanded by the ghost of his father to murder his uncle, is a civilized man burdened with the archaic responsibility of revenge; Othello, the Moor of Venice as the subtitle of the play defines him, is a man with a double social and cultural identity, on the

margin between the civilized (even over-civilized, sophisticated) city, Venice, on the one hand and barbarism on the other. Like Macbeth, Othello is a heroic locus of conflict, being a christianized pagan and a soldier who has risen to general by sheer quality and at the time of the play has just been reborn into the world of the City (he says it's just nine months since he left "the tented field"!). The trusting, naturally noble, essentially unsophisticated Othello is destroyed by the man who is his diametrical opposite, the devilish Iago, the nihilistically cynical man of the city who knowingly embraces evil.

Othello is vulnerable to Iago's manipulations because he has no notion of the powers of the spoken word to "drug and bewitch the soul with a kind of evil persuasion," as the sophist Gorgias put it. Both Othello and Macbeth learn that they have been duped by tricks of language; Othello discovers in a single blinding flash in the final scene of the action that Iago, that "demi-devil," has ensnared his soul and led him to murder Desdemona; but he has no idea how this was achieved. Macbeth's anagnorisis is very different: a prolonged and relentless process of seeing what mistakes he has made and why he must die. Unlike Shakespeare's other villains, he is no "Machiavellian" wielder and misuser of eloquence but, quite the contrary, a man whose thoughts break off uncompleted and who is mesmerized by the weird sisters' insidious predictions and his wife's demonic rhetoric.

Tragedy is one thing for the protagonist, another for the audience. Macbeth's experience is terrifying and limitless; but it is contained within a play that is shapely, orderly, limited. Both Macbeth's predicament and the play that contains him are as we have seen chiastic: for Macbeth, chiasmus is the mind-trap of "nothing is, but what is not," of "I am afraid to think what I have done / Look on't again I dare not." But the audience experiences the larger chiasmus of the whole action, its journey down into darkness and up again towards light. Macbeth's experience is that of what it is to die; what the movement and organization of the whole play insists on is "that death and the continuation of life are inseparable and interdependent, twin halves of the larger category, existence: their dual presence is everywhere in the play, in its central events, the murder of Duncan (and survival of his sons), and the murder of Banquo (and survival of his son)" (Paul 1992: 167). Macbeth is confronted by Banquo's ghost, a corpse that refuses to lie down, and by the apparition of "a bloody child" which stands not only for the children killed by the tyrant but also for the human future: blood belongs to both death and life; in the larger perspective of the whole work the blood violently shed in the play is also the placenta that nourishes the unborn future.

On one of its higher levels of abstraction *The Tragedy of Macbeth* is about violence and its purgation out of the community through a process that in-

volves exploring the depths and coming back up from them. The problem of violence, personal and political, individual and global, cannot be solved until we confront, recognize and let go of the violence within ourselves. We cannot become rational beings until we have faced up to our own irrationality. When we watch *Macbeth,* we have the pleasurable sense of having done just that and come through the experience not merely unscathed but invigorated. Art, and all the arts of language, provide imitations of life or formalizations of life that make it seem manageable and tolerable. Can they help us not only to fit chaotic experience into orderly forms and patterns but also to find such patterns and forms within experience?

Notes

1. Shakespeare's use of the play metaphor is investigated in detail by Anne Barton (Anne Righter) in *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Play* (1962).
2. The exception is Macbeth, who is not a calculating villain like Richard of Gloucester, Iago, and Edmund in *King Lear.* Nor of course is he a master of rhetoric, but the reverse.
3. "Macdonwald and Cawdor prefigure Macbeth in character, name, and manner of dying. They stand for what Macbeth is to become and how he is to die" (Paul 1992: 55).
4. For a satisfactory account of what it is that makes the killing of young Siward or Seyward in the final scene a prefiguration of or substitution for Macbeth's own death, I must refer the reader to Paul 1992: 55, and to Booth 1983: 114, and passim.
5. This is one of the cryptic apparitions the weird sisters show him in 4,1.

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Part II

Figuration—The Persuasive Power of Deeds and Tropes

CHAPTER 8

Rhetoric, Truth, and the Work of Trope

Alan Rumsey

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

The main body of this chapter will consist of three parts, the second of which is an antidote to the first, and the third of which explains why. In the first part I will play the part of the gadfly, expressing certain reservations I have about the Rhetoric Culture project. I am in full agreement with what I take to be one of the project's main aims: to overcome the limits of previous understandings of discourse that give pride of place to its truth-functional aspects and devalue others as *mere* rhetoric. But, for reasons I will argue in the first part of the chapter, I think it would be counterproductive to try to address this problem by simply reversing the terms of the opposition and calling for a revaluation of the rhetorical over the truth-functional. For the problem is not just with the way the terms have been valued relative to each other, but with the way the opposition has been drawn between them in the first place. Nor can the opposition be dissolved by trying to absorb or displace what was on one side of it by what was on the other—the rhetorical. Or at least not without a radical transformation in what we mean by the rhetorical, since all the established senses of that term depend on its relation to what it had been opposed to. While I would not rule out using that old term, or perhaps *rhetoricality* (per Bender and Wellbery 1990) for such a transformed, nondualistic understanding of language function, I argue that in order to develop such an understanding we can draw only selectively on the traditions of classical and even modern rhetoric, while reconfiguring or rejecting others. And we must be alert to the

possibility that other traditions besides the rhetorical may be equally relevant, including much of the work that has been done under the rubric of "poetics." In view of these theoretical considerations, and of recent empirically based work by linguistic anthropologists on language function and language ideology in cross-cultural perspective, the tenor of the first part of the chapter will be cautionary, laying out the problems and assessing the prospects for what I would see as a properly anthropological understanding of "rhetoric."

In the second part of the chapter I take the scare-quotes off of that word by turning the discussion around from a cross-cultural focus to more limited one, on the culture that has produced the "cross-cultural" in the first place, namely, the culture of anthropology, as manifest in its most characteristic textual artifact, the ethnography. Whatever its status as an analytical term for cross-cultural comparison, the idea of rhetoric in its more-or-less traditional form (along with its double, the truth-functional) is, I take it, a well established commonplace in the culture from which the genre of the ethnographic monograph has been both produced and critiqued. For instance, in Clifford and Marcus's widely discussed (1986) volume *Writing Culture,* much of the critique took the form of an unmasking operation, whereby texts that, according to the critics, had been framed as "realist" ethnography were shown to be "inventing things not actually real" (Clifford 1986: 6) through the use of "powerful lies of exclusion and rhetoric" (1986: 7). Among the most powerful rhetorical "tricks" (Rabinow 1986: 52) ethnographers were accused of using were tropes or poetic figures masquerading as straightforward representations of reality. Yet the attitude toward rhetoric and tropes in this work was ambivalent, in that, while ethnographers were criticized for using them while pretending not to, it was often recognized that understanding could not really be gained without them (Clifford 1986; Pratt 1986: 50). The latter point has been more fully accepted, and its implications constructively developed, in other work on the rhetoric of the social sciences that began around the same time (McClosky 1985; Nelson et al. 1987), and in more recent work on ethnographic writing (Geertz 1988; Herzfeld 1992; Rumsey 2004). In the second part of the chapter I substantiate this point with respect to what Tyler and Strecker call the "rhetoric of culture" through a close analysis of some key tropes used in ethnography. In the process I show how analytical concepts that were first developed within the traditions of rhetoric and poetics can be used in such a way as to undermine the very opposition in terms of which those categories have been determined. Generalizing from this finding, I conclude that some such concepts are indeed valuable for use in the cross-cultural study of language and discourse, even in settings where the actors' own linguistic ideologies do not include a basic opposition between the truth-functional aspects of language and others.

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In his report on the Fourth International Rhetoric Culture Conference, where an earlier and quite different version of this chapter was presented, Ralph Cintron (2005) comments that:

> Despite its checkered history and character, rhetorical studies remains fairly conservative because it has built its theories on a narrow range of assumptions about the nature of language and rhetorical practices without ever imagining the wide variety of rhetorical performance and theory that anthropology is capable of uncovering.

I agree with this view, and would carry it further by adding that any properly anthropological—that is to say, cross-cultural and comparative—study of communicative practices and of people's conceptions of them must call into question the category of "rhetoric" itself. For it has a specifically Western History,[1] both as meta-discursive concept and as a set of everyday practices to which that meta-level conceptualization is reflexively related. Within the course of that history, the word *rhetoric* has been used in differing, sometimes inconsistent ways, both in popular parlance and even within the work of a single theorist—all of which, however, are bound up with particular Western understandings of the nature of language and speech in the world. To see why, let us now turn to a brief review of some of those understandings.

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There is of course a vast historical literature on the theory and practice of rhetoric.[2] In this and the following section I wish to draw attention to two points that are evident from that history. The first point arises from an observation by Roland Barthes, as quoted and extended upon by Chaim Perelman in the opening passage of his book *The Realm of Rhetoric:*

> In his remarks on ancient rhetoric, Roland Barthes (1970: 194) correctly observed that "rhetoric must always be read in its structural interplay with its neighbors—grammar, logic, poetics and philosophy." I would add that in order best to define and situate rhetoric, we must clarify its relationship to dialectic. (Perelman 1982: 1)

The relational character of the category of "rhetoric" is evident from the moment of its birth, which seems to have taken place in the works of Plato. Before that there was of course a term *rhētor,* meaning "politician who speaks publicly." But according to the historian of rhetoric Edward Schiappa, in all of known Greek literature there are no attested instances of the term *rhētorikē* prior to Plato's use of it in the *Gorgias:*

> Prior to the fourth century *logos* and *legein* were used to describe what would later be called rhetoric. Both terms are far broader in their meanings than the term *rhētorikē,* hence the appearance of the term *rhētorikē* signals a new level of specificity and conceptual clarity concerning the different verbal arts. (Schiappa 1991: 45)

But it was not only for "conceptual clarity" that Plato coined the term. Rather, Schiappa argues, he did so in order to distinguish his own teachings—which he called by the then also recently coined term *philosophia*—from those of others, including Isocrates and the Sophists, and to devalue the latter (Schiappa 1991: 45; Nienkamp 2001: 143 n.23). At a more specific level, Plato was also concerned to distinguish between rhetoric and dialectic (*dialektikē,* another term apparently coined by Plato himself), where "the goal of dialectic is truth, while the goal of rhetoric is belief or persuasion *rather than* truth or knowledge" (Nienkamp 2001: 28[3]; italics in original).[4]

Aristotle, too, defined and situated rhetoric specifically in relation to dialectic, but rather differently from the way Plato did. In Aristotle's formulation, dialectic was the form of argumentation used between or among people who are in dialogue with each other, and rhetoric the form used by a single speaker when addressing an audience (Aristotle 1975: 1357a; cf. Perelman 1982: 4–5). At a higher level of contrast, Aristotle distinguished between dialectical reasoning (common to both dialectic and rhetoric as the "counterpart" of dialectic), which deals with opinion and its justification, and analytic reasoning, which deals with truth and its demonstration through formal operations such as the syllogism (Perelman 1982: 1–2). The distinction drawn by Aristotle at the latter, more general level is like Plato's in separating a realm of language use that is associated with the discovery and communication of truth, from another realm in which speech comprises a kind of action—preeminently persuasion, but for Aristotle also praise, blame, and competition for renown.

This distinction as made by Plato and Aristotle corresponds to a perduring, fateful opposition in the subsequent history of Western philosophical and popular understandings of language, between those aspects of it that have to do with the formulation of true statements *about* the world (referred to here as its "truth-functional" aspects) and those that have to do with interested action *in* the world. This distinction was developed with renewed vigor by enlightenment thinkers such as Descartes, Bacon, and Boyle, and in England became institutionalized by the Royal Society as a central part of its program for the development of experimental science. In its most extreme form, this program tended to denigrate natural language per se as inherently obfuscatory, and tried to replace it entirely with instrumental observations and mathematical symbols. But insofar as language was necessary at all, there was an attempt to

purge it of all artifice, pomp and fancy—in short of all "rhetorick"—under the assumption that there is a kind of "zero-degree" of language (Barthes 1968) at which, through what Bacon called "plain and simple words" (1860: 92), it most directly reflects the true nature of things. This project was renewed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, beginning with the great advances that were made in the development of symbolic logic by Mill, Russell, Frege, and others; continued with the work of the early Wittgenstein, Reichenbach, Carnap and the Vienna School; and is evident to this day in the continuing commitment of Chomsky and his school to a Cartesian vision of an innate *faculté de langage* through which language functions primarily as a medium for expressing thoughts about the world rather than as a form of action in it.

The approaches to language that I have just outlined have of course developed within the discourse of philosophers and technical specialists, and were/are not necessarily found in just the same form in other Western social milieux. But they do correspond in a general way to some of the most robust aspects of what I (following Whorf and Silverstein) have elsewhere called Standard Average European linguistic ideology, namely:

> the dualism of words and things; talk versus action; real world events versus ways of talking about them. Words in this view are not things, but only stand for things. They are mere symbols or signs, the purpose of which is to talk about a reality that lies beyond them and apart from them. (Rumsey 1990: 352)

Insofar as it depends upon that kind of distinction, the notion of "rhetoric" is problematic for the cross-cultural project that is linguistic anthropology, since, as I and a number of its other practitioners (e.g., Rosaldo 1982; Hill and Hill 1988; Hill 1998: 80ff.) have shown, in other parts of the world no such distinction informs people's "shared bodies of common sense understandings of the nature of language in the world" (Rumsey 1990: 346).

It has also come to appear problematical even from a Western philosophical viewpoint, as exemplified by the defection of Wittgenstein from the logical-formalist camp I have referred to above in favor of his well-known later views on meaning as use (Wittgenstein 1953), and by the argument of J. L. Austin in his little bombshell of a book *How to Do things with Words*—which was first delivered as a lecture series in 1955. Aspects of that argument are worth reviewing here, because Austin was one of the seminal theorists in the field of what has since come to be known as linguistic pragmatics, which I would see as one of the main eddy currents that have been generated by the passing of traditional rhetoric (cf. Bender and Wellbery 1990: 33–35).

Austin starts off in Lecture I with the observation that sentences such as "I pronounce you man and wife" seem to differ from ones like "The cat is on

the mat," in that with the latter we say something that is true or false, whereas with the former we attempt to do something, such as, in this case, to change people's social status, either successfully or unsuccessfully depending upon whether certain other requirements are met (that the parties are not already married, that the person pronouncing this is duly authorized to perform that role, etc.). Generalizing from this observation, Austin provisionally distinguishes between two mutually exclusive classes of utterances, which he calls "constatives"—those with which we say something, subject to tests of truth or falsity—and "performatives"—those with which we do something, subject to tests of appropriateness in context or "felicity."

But what is less often noted about Austin's argument is that this initial distinction between utterance types is superseded later in the book, where the argument undergoes what Austin calls a "sea change" (p.150). Instead of two different kinds of utterance, only one of which is a kind of doing, Austin posits three distinct dimensions along with all utterances are to be considered as forms of action. Though at some points in the discussion he refers to these as three distinct acts, he makes it clear that this is for analytical purposes only, and that all three of them are always present simultaneously in what he alternatively refers to as a single "act" (as will be seen below). The three are:

— the act *of* saying something, which Austin calls the "locutionary" act
— the act that is performed *in* saying something, the "illocutionary" act
— that which is brought about *by* saying something, the "perlocutionary" act.

It is generally with respect to the first of these kinds or dimensions of action—the locutionary—that the question of truth or falsity arises, but even there, usually or always[5] in conjunction with issues of appropriateness or "felicity" of the kind that we tend to think are more relevant as conditions for the illucutionary act. For example:

> Suppose we confront [the apparently constative utterance] "France is hexagonal" with the facts, in this case, I suppose, with France, is it true or false? Well, if you like, up to a point; of course I can see what you mean by saying that it is true for certain intents and purposes. It is good enough for a top-ranking general perhaps, but not for a geographer. "Naturally it is pretty rough," we should say, "and pretty good as a pretty rough statement." But then someone says: "But is it true or false? I don't mind whether it is rough or not; of course it's rough, but it has to be true or false—it's a statement isn't it?" How can one answer this question … ? It is just rough, and that is the right and final answer to the question of the relation of "Is France hexagonal" to France. It is a rough description; it is not a true or false one. (p.143)

Austin then gives another example, which introduces other kinds of complications:

> Consider the constative "Lord Raglan won the battle of Alma," remembering that that Alma was a soldier's battle if ever there was one and that Lord Raglan's orders were never transmitted to some of his subordinates. Did Lord Raglan then win the battle of Alma or did he not? Of course in some contexts, perhaps in a school book, it is perfectly justifiable to say so—it is something of an exaggeration, maybe, and there would be no question of giving him a medal for it. As "France is hexagonal" is rough, so "Lord Raglan won the battle of Alma" is exaggerated and suitable to some contexts and not to others; it would be pointless to insist on its truth or falsity. (pp.143–44)

This example is an especially telling one for anthropological understandings of language use, because the conditions according to which the suitability of such a statement is judged include the presupposed existence of social institutions that shape the possibilities for agency in particular ways, and the grounds on which it can be contested.[6] As Austin clearly appreciates, this takes us a long way off from the rarefied notion of "truth conditions" in which all of logic and Austin's own provisional category of the "constative" had been grounded.

On the basis of these and other examples Austin concludes that, notwithstanding his three-way distinction among kinds or dimensions of action, "the total speech act in the total speech situation is the *only actual* phenomenon which, in the last resort, we are engaged in elucidating" (p.148); that "stating, describing etc., are *just two* names among a great many others for illocutionary acts; they have no unique position" (pp.148–49); and that "[in] particular they have no unique position over the matter of being related to facts in a unique way called true or false" (p.149). In all these respects, Austin's findings are obviously quite at odds with the long-dominant Western linguistic ideologies I have discussed above which posit a basic dichotomy between saying and doing, and see the expression of true statements about the world as the main business of the former. Austin is of course fully aware of that fact, and frames his argument as an explicit critique of those views. As an ordinary language philosopher, he is able to make that critique on the basis of close observation and consideration of how English speakers talk about how they talk, and the resources that are available for doing so, in the form of speech-act verbs and constructions in which they occur. That is interesting, for it shows up a certain lack of fit between our everyday linguistic and metalinguistic practices in this respect, and the varieties of language ideology that take the form of more abstract precepts such as the distinction between the rhetorical and the truth-functional. In this respect, Austin's analysis brings Western everyday practices

(or Oxford English ones anyway) closer to the non-Western language ideologies I have referred to above, where no such distinction is elaborated.

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While the negative criterion of non-truth-functionality has always been a sufficient one for separating "rhetoric" from other aspects of logos—which were thereby transformed into dialectic, logic, philosophy, or whatever—it has never sufficed for giving rhetoric a well-defined identity of its own. This is evident from its inception, as already illustrated above by the differences between Plato and Aristotle in how they distinguished rhetoric from dialectic. It is even more strongly evident within the work of Aristotle itself, in that the way in which he defines rhetoric, in the book by that name, is quite different from the way he actually establishes and delimits his subject matter in the rest of the book. His explicit definition of *rhetoric* is what I call an "attributive" one, specifying it in terms of the end it achieves and of people's ability to use it accordingly, namely: "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" (Aristotle 1975, book 2, chap. 1, lines 1–2). But when Aristotle gets down to actual cases he does not approach the matter in the way that this definition would seem to require, by starting with a general notion of "persuasion" and considering how it works wherever it is found. Rather, he uses what I call a "substantive" approach, which starts with particular speech genres associated with each of the three main kinds of occasions for public address in classical Greece, namely: law courts, political assemblies, and ceremonial events at public festivals. These in turn become the basis for his famous classification of rhetoric into the three varieties he called judicial, deliberative, and epideictic, a classification that lives on today in textbooks on rhetoric as well as in specialist works on the subject.

An example of the latter is George Kennedy's 1998 book *Comparative Rhetoric*—a work that is especially pertinent for the present discussion because it is, as far as I know the first and still the only serious attempt to produce a cross-cultural account of rhetoric. Kennedy's project is an ambitious one, dealing with rhetoric in settings as diverse as Aboriginal Australia, Highland New Guinea, Native North America, ancient Greece, Rome, India, China, and indeed, with purported examples of it among nonhuman species including bees, chimpanzees, deer, dogs, and vervet monkeys. As his framework for the comparison he uses Aristotle's categories of judicial, deliberative, and epideictic rhetoric. To be sure, Kennedy disavows any "desire to impose western notions of rhetoric on an understanding of other cultures [nor other species, one presumes]" (Kennedy 1998: 217). But as a result of his empirical study he purports to have established that one of Aristotle's types—deliberative rhetoric—is in fact "a universal genre" (Kennedy 1998: 220) across human societies

and is present in many animal species as well; and that Aristotle's other two types—judicial and epideictic rhetoric—are widespread as well.

Alongside this substantively based framework, Kennedy's proffered *definition* of rhetoric is an abstract, attributive one—one that is even more general than Aristotle's, resting not on the notion of "persuasion" per se but on a notion of "energy." Rhetoric is for Kennedy:

> a form of energy that drives and is imparted to communication. … When an individual encounters a situation that threatens or seems to offer an opportunity for advancing self interest, an emotional reaction takes place; [it] may be fear, anger, hunger, lust, indignation, pity, curiosity, love, or some other emotion. … This emotion, often unconsciously, prompts response that expends energy in utterance or physical action directed toward filling the need [*sic*].[7] (Kennedy 1998: 215)

I find this definition of rhetoric less satisfactory than ones based on persuasion such as Aristotle's because it is fundamentally asocial, failing to capture the essentially "addressed" character of anything that most anthropologists anyway would be willing to call rhetoric.[8] But my reason for presenting Kennedy's definition here is not to accept or reject it as such. Rather it is to show that he, like Aristotle, operates with both a substantive notion of rhetoric (e.g., deliberative rhetoric as "universal genre") and an attributive one. While I would not want to rule out either of these kinds of conceptualization in principle, I believe that, for a properly comparative study of language use, we need to pay more attention than either Aristotle or Kennedy does to the difference between the two. There are two reasons for this: 1) no communicative act or genre has only one use or effect; and 2) most or all communicative acts can be considered from the viewpoint of what makes them persuasive or not, regardless of genre.

Regarding the first of these points, consider for example Kennedy's "universal genre" of deliberative rhetoric as it operates, let's say, on the floor of the national legislative bodies in London, Washington, or Berlin. Much of what goes on there is no doubt aimed at persuasion, but in the course of the speeches given there, according to their own understandings the matter, the politicians do a good many other things as well. For example, they may propose, oppose, assess, estimate, describe, diagnose, analyze, affirm, deny, concede, direct, resign, advise, warn, urge, proclaim, swear, interrupt, entreat, announce, or recommend. These examples are taken from the work of Austin (1962) discussed above, and are just a few of the kinds of "things we do with words," which he identified on the basis of how we talk about them—a folk view of the matter based on the range of "illocutionary forces" that happen to have verbs for describing them in English. More recent work in linguistic anthropology (e.g., Silverstein 1976, 2003; Parmentier 1994, 1997; Hanks 1990, 1996) has

developed the Peircean notion of indexicality in such a way as to allow us take account of other things we do in discourse besides the ones for which any ordinary language provides an explicit metalanguage, and of their complex linkages to other aspects of the social context; and this work has produced a far more sophisticated and multifarious account of language "function" (Silverstein 1987, 1993). The most relevant point here, however, is one that is shown by all this work, including Austin's and indeed by earlier functional approaches such as those of Buehler (1990 [1934]), Firth (1957), and Jakobson (1971 [1957], 1960), namely, that the things we do with words are multifarious and complexly intertwined, with more than one of them going on within any given utterance or speech genre.[9]

Conversely, turning now to the second point, any given communicative function is likely to be associated with more than one utterance type or communicative genre. This is true especially of "persuasion," as was already appreciated by Plato,[10] and as has been demonstrated in detail for many kinds of communicative genres over the past fifty years including Wayne Booth (1961) for fiction, Erving Goffman for ordinary conversation (1969), Roland Barthes (1977, 1984) for photography, Hayden White for historiography (1973), James Clifford and George Marcus (1986) for ethnography, Deirdre McClosky (1985) for economics, and Theodore Brown (2003) for the natural sciences.

In short, the relation between communicative functions and communicative genres is neither one-to-one, one-to-many, or many-to-one, but many-to-many. Thus, any study of the persuasive functions of language that focuses only on certain genres[11] will be too restrictive for adequately understanding them even within a single sociohistorical setting.[12]

The limitations of such an approach become even more debilitating if one is trying to treat "rhetoric" in broader comparative terms (as in Kennedy 1998). For as a wealth of linguistic-anthropological studies have shown (e.g., Gossen 1972; Bauman and Sherzer 1974; Sherzer 1983; Duranti 1994), speech-act types and communicative genres vary cross-culturally, both with respect to their distinctive formal features and with respect to their imputed pragmatic effects. Nor can persuasion itself be assumed as a process or effect that is conceptualized in the same way everywhere. A truly anthropological approach to the subject has to leave as an open, empirical issue the extent to which such a concept figures in any given linguistic ideology, and how people's understandings may differ cross-culturally, both with respect to the process itself and the associations it may have with specific speech genres.

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The third relevant point that emerges from a consideration of the history of the category of rhetoric is that, even insofar as it has developed as a way of

trying to understand what is *done* with speech, the understanding is one that shares certain key limitations of the corresponding, counterposed "grammatical" and "logical" understanding of what is *said* in speech, namely, the idea that the process is one that begins in the mind of an individual actor and is consummated in the minds or acts of others.[13] In the case of what is said, the assumed mental starting point is a thought about some reality "out there" that is captured in a linguistic representation and thereby conveyed to the minds of one's addressee(s). In the case of what is done, for example by rhetorical persuasion, the starting point is an intention in the mind of an individual actor for the addressee(s) to carry out some action or change his beliefs.

The understanding of speech-as-social-action that has developed within recent linguistic anthropology—and the body of theory on which it draws—is rather different from this, in the following ways:

1. As discussed above, it does not assume that only one thing is going on in any given speech act or utterance event, but rather the opposite, that many things are. Indeed, since the question of "what is going on" is in part one of real-time, meta-pragmatic construal (Agha 1997; Silverstein 1998) on the part of the participants, the range of things that are going on is potentially open ended.
2. It does not assume that the efficacy of speech—the "what" in "what's going on"—is limited to things that change the current state of play (e.g., by imparting a new thought to the addressee or causing him to do something that he would not otherwise have done). Rather, in common with recent social theory, it takes much of that efficacy to lie in processes of social reproduction, that is, in somehow "keeping things the same" or "naturalizing" the status quo. In doing so, it rejects the assumption that is often made in popular understandings of "society" and "culture" that the default process is for them to reproduce themselves over time unless obstructed from doing so or counteracted by specific forces for change. Social reproduction takes continuous work, and is not inherently any more likely as an outcome of social process than is social transformation (see, for example, Merlan and Rumsey 1991).
3. It does not assume that human subjects enter into social processes—whether of "persuasion" or any thing else—in preconstituted form, but, on the contrary, sees their subjectivity as being constituted by such processes. In this respect it is consistent with the work of theorists such as Hegel, G. H. Mead, Freud, Vygotsky, and Bakhtin. But this interactionist position is one to which linguistic anthropology has also been led by its cross-cultural focus, which has placed it in dialogue with many

other cultural traditions in which the relational constitution and potential permeability of the person are emphasized far more than in the West (e.g., Leenhardt 1979; Ruel 1970; Daniel 1984; Strathern 1988).

■ ■ ■

So far in the discussion of understandings of "rhetoric" I have been focusing mainly on traditional views such as those of Plato and Aristotle. In my account of the foundational opposition between rhetoric and truth-functionality, I showed how that opposition continued to play such a role right up through the Enlightenment and in its modern offshoots such as Chomskian neo-Cartesian linguistics—notwithstanding the considerable shift of evaluative stance toward rhetoric that happened during that time, and its demotion from a central position in Western learning to a marginal one. But over the past half-century or so, the picture has become more complicated than that, in that a body of theory has developed under the banner of rhetoric that has tried to restore it to a position of greater centrality, by broadening the range of phenomena that are seen to fall within its scope, and developing new approaches to them. I have already referred to some of this work above when discussing the diverse forms of persuasion revealed in rhetorical studies by Booth of fiction, Barthes of photography, White of historiography, and so forth. At the same time that this broadening of the operative range of rhetorical studies has been going on, there has also been a profusion of ways of defining their subject matter. One of the new ways of defining it has already been exemplified above in the work of George Kennedy—who, incidentally, is not only the author of the important cross-cultural study of rhetoric discussed there, but also the translator and editor of the most recent and authoritative English translation of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (Kennedy 1991), and author of a detailed three-volume history of rhetoric in Ancient Greece, Rome, and in the Earlier Christian periods (Kennedy 1962, 1973, 1982). As we saw above, Kennedy defines rhetoric attributively, in terms of a notion of "energy"—the energization of language (a notion that is already present in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in the concept of *energia* [33.2.2], but which he did not use in his definition of rhetoric).

Another permutation is found in the work of Kenneth Burke, who retains the traditional focus on persuasion as a relevant aspect of rhetoric, but introduces as his "key term" (Burke 1969: xiii, 24) the idea of "identification." For Burke, rhetoric is all about the process by which persons, entities, or positions become identified with one another (which necessarily entails their shared differentiation from others). By casting his analysis in terms of identification rather than persuasion per se, Burke seeks to extend its subject matter "beyond the traditional bounds of rhetoric" (1969: xiii). In particular he recasts it this way in order to get around one of the problems with traditional accounts of rheto-

ric that I have discussed above, namely, the idea that the process in question—persuasion—begins as a clear-cut intention in the mind of the speaker. For:

> There is an intermediate area of expression that is not wholly deliberate, yet is not wholly unconscious. It lies midway between aimless utterance and speech directly purposive. For instance, a man who identifies his private ambitions with the good of the community may be partly justified, partly unjustified. He may be using mere pretext to gain individual advantage at the public expense; yet he may be quite sincere, or even may willingly make sacrifices in behalf of such identification. Here is a rhetorical area not analyzable either as sheer design or as sheer simplicity. And we would treat of it here. … Particularly when we come upon such aspects of persuasion as are found in "mystification," courtship and the "magic" of class relationships [all topics treated extensively in the book], the reader will see why the classical notion of clear purposive intent is not an accurate fit, for describing the ways in which the members of a group promote social cohesion by acting rhetorically upon themselves and one another. … All told, persuasion ranges from the bluntest quest for advantage, as in sales promotion or propaganda, through courtship, social etiquette, education and the sermon, to a "pure" form that delights in the process of appeal for itself alone, without ulterior purpose. And identification ranges from the politician who, addressing an audience of farmers, says, "I was a farm boy myself," through the mysteries of social status, to the mystic's devout identification with the source of all being (Burke 1969: xiii–xiv).

Yet another permutation is found in the work of the theorist who has been called "the other great rhetorical system-builder of the twentieth century" besides Burke (Nienkamp 2001: 91), namely, Chaim Perelman, in collaboration with Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca. Their system is quite different from Burke's in that its aim is not to extend rhetoric beyond the realm of intentionality, but rather to recuperate it as a theory of argumentation. In their view, Western philosophical understandings of the reasoning process took a wrong turn during the Enlightenment, from which they have still not recovered. In particular, they were derailed by Descartes when he decreed that we must "take well nigh for false everything which was only plausible," and when he "made the self-evident the mark of reason, and considered rational only those demonstrations which, starting from clear and distinct ideas, extended, by means of apodeictic proofs, the self-evidence of the axioms to the derived theorems" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:1). By contrast, picking up where Aristotle left off with his account of dialectic as "the art of reasoning from generally accepted opinions," Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca develop a "new rhetoric" that takes as its key term not *persuasion* but *adherence,* and as its object "the discursive

techniques allowing us to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the theses presented for its assent" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 4, italics in original). By broadening the range of these techniques to include not only the kind of logical demonstration through which certainty is produced, but the full range of ways in which people who argue with each other "address the whole person" (Perelman 1982: 110), and "try hard to elaborate reasonable systems, imperfect but perfectible" (1982: 160), Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca develop an approach that works to close the rift I have discussed above between truth-functional aspects of logos and others that are concerned with action in the world. In this respect, their approach is similar to that of Austin described above, though the kind of action they are concerned with is more strictly limited to "argumentation."

In short, some of the most important work on rhetoric and the philosophy of language over the past sixty years has been an attempt to address the same problems with traditional accounts of "rhetoric" that I have diagnosed above on the basis of their inadequacy for cross-cultural studies of the kind that linguistic anthropologists are engaged in. There is no doubt that it has achieved considerable success in this regard. Indeed, the work of theorists such as Burke and Austin has often been drawn upon by anthropologists—linguistic and otherwise—to help them make sense of their empirical findings (e.g., Hymes 1974; Tambiah 1968, 1979; Finnegan 1969), just as the rhetoricians have drawn upon the findings of anthropology to broaden their perspectives on their subject matter (e.g., Burke 1969: 43, 65, 205–206, 269; Kennedy 1998). But what has been lost in the process is any clear sense of what we mean by "rhetoric," as this is no longer assured by any widespread consensus about what effect of language we are talking about—persuasion? identification? adherence? energization? communication?[14] —or about the means by which it is achieved. In this respect I agree with Bender and Wellbery's judgment about the present state of play in this field, that

> where rhetorical tradition is invoked, what is really being accomplished is the satisfaction of a nostalgia or the legitimation of one's enterprise of inquiry through a venerable genealogy. Of course, overriding constants may be posited in order to construct a history of rhetoric from, say, Aristotle to the present, and thus to attribute contemporary value to ancient rhetorical theory. … But such continuities will be largely terminological or so abstract in nature (e.g., rhetoric has always been concerned with language in action) that their cognitive value will be minimal (Bender and Wellbery 1990: 37–38).

Bender and Wellbery's way of dealing with this problem is to mark the *dis*continuities with the classical tradition explicitly by introducing a new term, *rhetoricality,* to describe what they see as an aspect of the modern condition,

that is "a generalized rhetoric that penetrates to the deepest levels of human experience" (1990: 25). They continue:

> Rhetoricality names the new conditions of discourse in the modern world, and, thus, the fundamental category of every inquiry that seeks to describe the nature of discursive action and exchange. Rhetoricality may be considered as a name for the underlying features both of modern practice and the theories that seek to account for it (Bender and Wellbery 1990: 25–26).

Through this act of naming, and their perspicuous survey of a wide range of contemporary approaches to discourse such as I have been reviewing above, Bender and Wellbery (1990: 27–37) successfully convey a sense that something new has been going on, and that this cannot be understood as a simple "return to rhetoric," in part because it denies the split of the logos in terms of which the idea of rhetoric was established in the first place. Unlike the notion of rhetoric, their "rhetoricality" is not defined by contrast to any other kind or aspect of discourse besides the rhetorical. When it comes to discourse, rhetoricality is all there is.

While it will be readily apparent from the discussion above that I agree with Bender and Wellbery about the withering away of the opposition between rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourse, I see a potential problem with their use of the term *rhetoricality* for the new (but in some ways old, pre-Socratic), non-dichotomous view of the matter. This is because that term is obviously derived from the word *rhetoric,* implying that, even though it is not the same category, it is a related one—more closely related than rhetoricality is to, for example, poetics or dialectic. But when we consider the range of modern approaches to "discursive action and exchange" that are reviewed in Bender and Wellbery and above, that does not appear to be the case. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's "new rhetoric" for example, draws as much upon the old dialectics and poetics as it does on the old rhetoric. And Burke's way of distinguishing between his "grammar of motives" (1945) and his "rhetoric of motives" (1969 [1950]) does not correspond at all closely to traditional ways of distinguishing between grammar and rhetoric. Language and speech are for Burke in all their manifestations a kind of action, namely "symbolic action." In this respect Burke's approach runs parallel to Austin's, in that for Austin language in all its uses—even in what he had called its "constative" ones—has illocutionary force. A significant strand of anthropology at least since Malinowski (1923, 1935) has taken a similarly action-centered view of the matter, and has in that and other respects been at the forefront of the modern movement that Bender and Wellbery have discerned.

Alongside the sharp discontinuities that they and others have also found between the foundational assumptions of traditional rhetoric and modern

forms of analysis that have often gone by that name, what has really survived as the most viable legacy of that tradition are specific conceptual tools that had been developed within it over the course of two thousand years of close analytical and practical engagement with actual, situated uses of language. This is amply attested elsewhere in this volume by the uses that contributors are able to make of terms such as *topos, inventio, dispositio, kairos,* and so forth. In the rest of this chapter, I will provide a further, extended example involving such a traditional term: *trope.*

■ ■ ■

As suggested by more than one contributor to this volume, and by Bender and Wellbery in the quote above, any account of rhetoric or rhetoricality that sees it as inherent in discourse per se must be capable of apprehending its own discursive productions as instances of what it is about. As pointed out by Tyler and Strecker (this volume, p 22), this is not really a case "in which rhetoric is displaced into its own instrumentality as some kind of higher order metadiscourse," but rather one of "interaction and interpenetration." As Vico appreciated long ago (Vico 1948 [1725]; cf. Meyer and Oesterreich, this volume), this is especially so in the discourse of the human sciences, where the subject matter includes phenomena that are of the same order as that which is trying to comprehend them, that is, other embodied human subjects and their ways of being and forms of understanding. Accordingly, close attention to the rhetorical, or I would say, poetic means through which that attempt is made can shed light on issues that are of general relevance for the understanding of human social life and the nature of communicative action within it. One such issue is the main one that I have discussed above in this chapter , namely, the distinction between truth-functionality and other aspects of language use, and the role it has played in the delimiting the subject matter of the Western understandings of "rhetoric." That issue became a hot one in the 1980s when there was an explosion of studies of the discourse of the human sciences including history, economics, and anthropology such as the ones I have referred to above.

Within anthropology for example, probably the single most widely discussed (and certainly the most passionately debated) book of the 1980s was the one I have mentioned in the introduction above, Clifford and Marcus's (1986) edited volume *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography.* One of the main kinds of reaction to the studies presented therein was to see them as a threat to the status of anthropology as an empirical science. A sustained focus on ethnographic texts as texts, and on the question of what makes them persuasive or not persuasive, was seen to devalue their capacity for representing the way things are in the world, and to deflect attention from what should be taken as prior and more important questions, namely, the empirical

adequacy of those representations and the theoretical propositions they were meant to bear on as evidence. Perhaps especially in the United States, there still seems to be a sizable contingent of anthropologists who feel this to be the case, and find themselves alienated from what they regard as the trendy "post-modern" wing of the discipline, which no longer strives to be scientific in its aims and methods.[15]

For their part, the textualists set themselves up for such a reaction by their wariness and frequently disparaging tone regarding the theoretical claims that the authors of "realist" ethnography had tried to advance by means of it. While the worst excesses of this movement are perhaps behind us by now, there still tends to be a wide epistemic gap between those who take the descriptive content and theoretical claims of ethnography seriously and those who would focus on its textual form as an object of principled enquiry. In a recent publication (Rumsey 2004) I have argued that it is not only possible but necessary to do both of these things at once—that, far from being inimical to a serious treatment of its theoretical claims, a focus on the poetic features of ethnography is actually necessary in order to understand those claims, because ethnography is inherently figurative. That is, it makes use of tropes—poetic figures—not just as ancillary aids to vivid description, but as essential constitutive features of the form of knowledge that it enables.

There is not the space here to rehearse my findings from that study in detail. Rather, in order to give the reader a feel for the evidence on which they are based, I will briefly summarize three of the four case studies in it, and then expand upon the conclusions from them that are most relevant to my argument here.

■ ■ ■

The first study concerns a short ethnographic text that has a seminal status within anthropology, as it was arguably the first exemplar of a then-new theoretical paradigm that became the predominant one in British anthropology for the second quarter of the twentieth century, namely, synchronic functionalism:[16] "Three Tribes of Western Australia" by A. R. Brown—who later changed his surname to Radcliffe-Brown (Brown 1913). Drawing in part upon Thornton's (1988) work on of the "the rhetoric of ethnographic holism," I argue that Brown there makes use what Thornton calls "the trope of classification" to create the image of an integrated social totality by careful organizing of his ethnographic description into distinct sections each concerned with what is projected as a separate "system" or aspect of social reality, and interrelating those sections through a web of cross references that reveal an ever denser set of functional interrelations among the social parts or "organs" as the reader moves through the sequence of textual sections. During the next

fifty years, that particular kind of internal cohesion became a standard feature of social-anthropological modes of "description," so much so that even now it is largely taken for granted when reading ethnography written in this vein. But the clarity, complexity, and comprehensive scope of cohesive links achieved by Brown within the space of only twenty-seven pages make this text very different from the standard ethnographies of the day, which—when they strived to connect things up at all—usually did so by constructing relationships between isolated bits of the description and hypothetical earlier states of affairs involving such fantasies as a universal evolutionary stage of "primitive promiscuity," "group marriage," or whatever (e.g., Fison and Howitt 1880; Spencer and Gillen 1899).

What is most remarkable about this 1913 text of Brown's is that although it is clearly identifiable as a work of synchronic functionalism—indeed as one of the first[17]—there is nothing in it that we can identify even in hindsight as a first attempt at explicit formulation of any of the general theoretical tenets that later became the hallmarks of that theoretical paradigm: the notion of social structure, the idea that societies are integrated totalities that should be studied first of all from the point of view of the functional interrelationships among their parts, etc. It was not until ten years later that Radcliffe-Brown published an explicit programmatic statement along those lines (Radcliffe-Brown 1923; cf. Stocking 1984: 155). What is innovative about the 1913 work is not anything explicitly theoretical, but rather the tropic organization of the ethnographic "description" through which it builds an image of wholeness, as discussed above.

The second case study is a classic ethnography by one of Radcliffe-Brown's most distinguished protégés, *The Nuer* by E. E. Evans-Pritchard (1940). Like Brown (1913), Evans-Pritchard built up an image of coherence, by how he carefully separated his "systems"—in this case, the "lineage system" from the "political system"—so as to be able to reveal their integration at a higher level ("the social system"), in this case both by demonstrating a formal congruence between the two systems and by developing an account of a particular social institution, "the dominant lineage," that allowed for a kind of mediation between the two, insofar as the lineage system provided a "conceptual skeleton" for the political system. And at a yet higher level, "the social system … is a system within the oecological system, partly dependent on it and partly existing in its own right" (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 94). Just as the structure of dominant lineages mediates between the lineage system and the political system, so, at a higher level, does the Nuer conceptualization of time and space provide a "bridge" between the ecological system and the social system (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 94). The overall configuration here, of systems within systems within systems, each treated within a separate section of the text but linked to the others through complex internal cross reference, is just what we saw in Brown (1913).

But in the way Evans-Pritchard constructs his links at the highest level of the complex—in this case between the "oecological system" and the "social system," he goes well beyond Radcliffe-Brown in that he builds the "bridge" not just by explicit cross reference between chapters, but by devoting a whole chapter to what he sees as the mediating Nuer concepts or "valuations" of time and space, which provide a bridge between everything in the numbered chapters before it, "Interest in Cattle," "Oecology," and everything that comes after: "The Political System," "The Lineage System," "The Age-Set System."

As in Brown's text, homologies are set up in *The Nuer* between the relationships among textual segments and those among aspects of the social reality they describe. But in *The Nuer* these are not primarily part-whole relations, but *mediating* relations between systems of different orders. The kind of mediation that is involved here is of a sort that in a later anthropology would have been called "symbolic" mediation, but for Evans-Pritchard in 1940 the operative notion is what he calls "value" or "(e)valuation." More reminiscent of the Marxian or Nietzschean concepts of value than the Saussurean one,[18] Evans-Pritchard's notion of humanly produced social value is for him what mediates both between the purely natural and the social; and, within the social, between the nitty-gritty of territorial politics and the lineage structures in terms of which it is conceptualized. As far as I know, he nowhere points this out in so many words, but it is implicit, both in his use of "value" for what is going on in both cases[19] and even more powerfully, in the way his overall exposition is constructed as a journey, in which the movement from the natural to the social in chapter 3 ("Time and Space") is recapitulated on another plane by the movement from the territorial system to the lineage system in the chapter by that name (chapter 5).

The third ethnography I treat is *The Religion of Java* by Clifford Geertz (1960). Like Brown's and Evans-Pritchard's, this ethnography has an overall tropic form through which it projects an image of social coherence. But here the relevant relationships are not part-whole ones or ones of mediation among the parts. Rather, they are relations of whole to whole, or microcosm-to-macrocosm—of the kind that Roy Wagner (2001) has referred to as the holographic relation. The relevant microcosm is provided by certain kinds of ritual. Chapter 1 of the book begins with an account of one such, the *slametan,* which Geertz tells us lies "at the very center of the whole Javanese religious system." A communal feast, this ritual "symbolizes the mystic and social unity of those participating in it." It "forms a kind of social universal joint, fitting the various aspects of social life and individual experience together in a way that minimizes uncertainty, tension, and conflict—or at least it is supposed to do so" (Geertz 1960: 11).

An equally important ritual in Geertz's account is Rijaja, the end-of-fast holiday. Geertz opens the last section of the book with the claim that "In Rijaja

almost every theme we have discussed in this report finds its place. … Rijaja is a sort of master symbol for Javanese culture … and, if one really understood everything one observed on Rijaja—a simple impossibility—one could really understand the Javanese" (1960: 379). The book ends with an even more inclusive (and in retrospect more hopeful than prescient)[20] claim, about this ritual in relation to the fledgling nation-state of Indonesia as whole:

> In a broad, diffuse and very general way [Rijaja] stresses the commonalities among all Indonesians, stresses tolerance concerning their differences, stresses their oneness as a nation. It is, in fact, the only truly nationalist of their rituals, and, as such, it indicates the reality and attainability of what is now the explicit ideal of all Indonesians—cultural unity and continuing social progress.

So in the way *The Religion of Java* is constructed as a book, Geertz posits what I have called a whole-to-whole relation between certain rituals and the rest of Javanese social life, the relation being not one of constituency as posited by Thornton (1988), where pieces fit together to form the whole, but one of symbolization, where the microcosm that is the ritual is made to stand for the presumed macrocosm that is Java, or Indonesia. As in Thornton's analysis of the trope of "classification" in ethnography, there is here a kind of analogy that is being posited between the form of the text and a form of life, but the analogy is not between part-whole relations in them. Rather it is between two parallel processes of symbolization, one that is engaged in by the Javanese when they perform the *slametan* or observe the Rijaja holiday, and another that is engaged in by readers of Geertz's book when they ponder his accounts of those rituals in relation to all the other disparate material that he has enclosed between them, all the while bearing in mind his weighty, paradigm-characterizing dictum that, impossible though it be, "if one really understood everything one observed on Rijaja … one could really understand the Javanese."

■ ■ ■

Returning now to the issue of truth-functionality and its relation to the "rhetorical," let us consider the epistemic status of the macrotropes that I have shown to comprise the backbones of three classic ethnographies by Brown, Evans-Pritchard, and Geertz. The case of Brown (1913) is especially interesting with respect to that issue, as he of all these writers is the one who most ardently strived to frame his work as a contribution to science—in particular to what he saw as a "natural science of society." In his view, such a science must begin with close observation and accurate description of the phenomena in question. That and only that is what he claimed to be doing in his "Three Tribes of Western Australia."[21] But through the way Brown's "description" par-

celed off the boundless flow of social life into distinct "systems" and tracked the complex interrelationships among them with an elaborate web of textual cross references, he created a powerful new version of the old notion of society as quasi-organic, giving an apparently concrete sense to his claim that "the whole [of Kariera] society forms a body of relatives" (Brown 1913: 150). As I have argued in detail elsewhere (Rumsey 2004), it was this strong form of "descriptive holism" that later become the basis for "social structure" as an explicit theoretical concept.

Now, in terms of Clifford's characterization (1986: 6, as quoted in my introduction), is this image simply a "lie"? In one respect it is, namely, in its use of the long-standard anthropological conceit of the "ethnographic present," whereby the writer abstracts from colonial history and describes a reconstructed, precontact state of affairs in the present tense (Rumsey 2004: 273). This is what Clifford rightly calls a "lie of exclusion." But with respect to that previous state of affairs, is Brown also telling what Clifford (1986: 6) calls a "lie of rhetoric"? I would argue that he is not, any more than is the general in Austin's example who says that "France is hexagonal." Whereas in Austin's example we are dealing with a "rough description" as opposed to a true or false one, in the case of Brown's form of descriptive holism we are dealing with what is commonly known as a "heuristic," or in Karl Popper's (1972) more vivid way of putting it, a "searchlight." While Brown's vision of societies as tightly integrated, quasi-organic totalities has since been extensively critiqued and is no longer current, almost all Australian Aboriginalists would agree that his "Three Tribes of Western Australia" was a more adequate ethnographic account than the previous speculative, unilineal evolutionist ones that he was reacting against.

In what sense more adequate? While I am in full agreement with Tyler and Strecker (this volume, intro.) that "an ethnography … is not the simple representation of an object that exists independently of its account," I also agree with their fellow social constructionist Roy Wagner (1975: 12) that "our understanding needs the external," and that when producing such an account, the ethnographer proceeds by "forcing his imagination, through analogy, to follow the detailed conformations of some external and unpredictable subject" and "uses his field experiences 'as a kind of lever', the way a pole-vaulter uses his pole, to catapult his comprehension beyond the limitations imposed by earlier viewpoints" (1975: 13). I would add that: 1) the analogies, tropes, and explicit theorizations that the ethnographer comes up with in this process can in turn become heuristics for others who use them in their own attempts to engage with the external and unpredictable; and 2) some heuristics are better suited for this purpose than others, in that the attempt to use them facilitates closer engagement with the subject matter and opens up more new questions and ways of imagining the object, even as those heuristics become superseded

in the process. It is in that sense that the macrotropic form imagined by Brown in 1913 was especially productive. Among other things, it was productive of explicit, discursively elaborated theory, which, in that form was subject to more direct contestation over its truth claims. But the fact that synchronic-functionalist holism developed first as an ethnographic macrotrope, and only later as explicit theory, shows that that we cannot separate out the "rhetorical" or "poetic" elements of this discourse as anterior to its truth-functional ones, as the classical tradition would have it.[22] Rather, they are, in this case, the prior ones, out of which the truth claims develop as literalizations of the trope of "social structure."

The case of Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer* is even more interesting in this respect, as Evans-Pritchard never did develop the virtual argument of the book's macrotropic form into an explicit body of theory. In the subtitle he calls the book "a description,"[23] and only at the end does he reveal that it has really been a work of "theory" all along, or at least a description "on a somewhat more abstract plane of analysis than is usual" (1940: 261).[24] Only in the last five pages of the book does he address such general issues as the nature of "social structure" or whether one should "speak of political behaviour as a distinct type of social behaviour" (1940: 264). And only in these last five pages does Evans-Pritchard begin to sound like the usual stereotype of a structural-functionalist. Much of the great subtlety with which he handles terms such as *opposition, structure,* and *value* in the preceding chapters disappears when he tries to give an explicit and general account of what he means by them. So, for example his discussion of values is much briefer than his earlier use of the concept would seem to warrant, stressing the way they control behavior rather than the way they are humanly created (1940: 263). And his definition of social structure stresses "consistency and constancy" of group relations rather than their relativity (1940: 262). He himself strains at the apparent inadequacy of this definition in respect of what he actually does with the concept in the rest of his text: "We do not, however insist on this limiting definition of structure and our description and analysis do not depend on it" (1940: 263; cf. p. 265).

So it seems that if both Brown in "Three Tribes … " and Evans-Pritchard in *The Nuer* made decisive advances in their techniques for constructing coherent images of human sociality, in both cases these ran ahead of any corresponding developments in explicit social theory. In Brown's case, he himself went on to initiate those developments (or introduce them into anthropology from Durkheimian sociology), but Evans-Pritchard never did. Even such explicit theoretical capital as he did provide in *The Nuer* was largely ignored in his own later works; in the end he seemingly even regarded these attempts as an embarrassment (Evans-Pritchard 1950). But the theoretical potential that was implicit in his image of Nuer sociality was such as to give rise to a veri-

table industry of reinterpretation, not just among structural-functionalists but among French structuralists (e.g., Dumont 1975), cultural ecologists (Sahlins 1961), semiotic anthropologists (Galaty 1981), and practice theorists (Karp and Maynard 1983)—all of whom could claim him as an apical ancestor.

The case of Geertz's *Religion of Java* is interesting for yet other reasons. First, alongside the example of the Brownian trope of part-whole ethnographic holism and its characteristic association with synchronic functionalism, the book provides another example of such elective affinity, in this case between the textual macrotrope of "holography" and brands of theory that posit a more or less messy realm of the "social," and a distinct realm of the "cultural" in terms of which it is "symbolized" and potentially "integrated." That is, these forms of theory have tended to be associated with a distinct form of textual organization, in which a particular cultural artifact, routine, or scenario is singled out and given a leading role in the text as kind of "key symbol" (Ortner 1973) that was taken to stand for much larger slice of social life.[25] But within that larger class of ethnographies, *The Religion of Java* is innovative in posing the project of symbolic integration as one that the actors themselves are quite deliberate and reflexive about, and placing the reader in such a way as to align her with them in that respect, so as to experience it directly as what Wagner (1975: 30) would call "alternative meaning," or what Tyler (1986) would call "evocation." What is most relevant for my argument here is that this alignment of reader and ethnographic subject is done by Geertz entirely at the level of macrotropic form, rather than through any discursively explicit statement in the book.

Indeed, according Geertz, it was done without any conscious intention on his part. In a message he sent me after reading the offprint of the article in which I first developed the above argument (Rumsey 2004), Geertz comments:

> The idea of "macrotropes" is an interesting one, and your description of that animating The Religion of Java seems incisive, though of course if I had any underlying textual model at the time I wrote it it was very much non-conscious. Things just seemed to "fall out that way!"—which is what I suppose everybody thinks as they work (Clifford Geertz, e-mail communication, 10 October 2004).

This reaction of Geertz's makes it plausible that the same thing could be true of the other two texts I have discussed, and well exemplifies the problem with the classical model in which the rhetorical act begins with an intention in the mind of a speaker or writer. Yet in all these ethnographies, there is what I have called a "virtual argument" in those tropic forms, which cannot be separated out as "merely rhetorical," much less as a "lie of rhetoric" (per Clifford 1986: 6), but should instead be seen as one of their most effective and realistic ways of engaging with their subject matter and generating insights about it.

■ ■ ■

Having reviewed my findings concerning the use of macrotropes in three classic ethnographies, I return to the question discussed in the first part of the chapter, of the status of the category "rhetoric" in relation to the anthropological study of language and its uses. My conclusion there was that category in its traditional form was of limited utility for such study because is was founded upon unviable assumptions about the nature of human social life and the special status of truth-functionality in relation to other aspects of language use; and that the more recent intellectual currents that have sometimes been summed up under the rubric of rhetoric or "rhetoricality" have so little in common with the traditional ones as to beg the question of why they should be identified with them. But I allowed that the classical tradition through long practical engagement with actual language use had built up a store of useful concepts and modes of analysis. One is the notion of trope or figure, which I drew upon for my analysis of ethnographic texts in the second part of the chapter. My argument and the examples treated there will I hope have borne out the claim I made there, that tropes are involved not just as ancillary aids to vivid description—or, as Socrates would have it, as artful ways of persuading us of truths that the speaker knows in advance—but as essential to the growth of knowledge and understanding.

Nor is this true only of the human sciences such as anthropology. It is also true of the natural sciences, as has been argued by many historians and philosophers (e.g., Leatherdale 1974; Kuhn 1979; Bradie 1984; Gross 1990; Lynch and Woolgar 1990; Ziman 2000). For present purposes, an especially powerful demonstration of this point can be found in a recent book by Theodore Brown (2003) entitled *Making Truth: Metaphor in Science*. Drawing on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) demonstration that metaphor plays an irreducible role in the cognitive frameworks through which we live our everyday lives, Brown shows that the same is true of the conceptual frameworks in terms of which the natural sciences operate. Drawing an example from his own field of biochemistry, he discusses the way in which the metaphor of the "channel" has been used to develop an understanding of the process through which ions (positively or negatively charged atoms or molecules) move in and out of living cells. Though productive of rigorous modeling and theorization of the process in question, this concept remains entirely metaphorical, as "we do not have access to something we could call a literal representation of a channel in a cell wall" (Brown 2003: 22). Rather, what we have is experimental evidence derived through the use of observation frameworks that are constructed in accordance with the metaphor. Understanding grows through mutual interplay between the two:

> … metaphors in science evolve in a characteristic way. An initial metaphor may be highly suggestive but devoid of much specific content. However, if it is well chosen, it suggests experiments that lead to elaboration of the metaphor. There is an interaction between the metaphorical frame of thought and the literal observation system in which experiments are formed. An apt metaphor suggests directions for experiment. The results of experiments in turn are interpreted in terms of an elaborated, improved metaphor or even a new one. At some stage in this evolutionary process the initial metaphor has acquired sufficient complexity to be considered a model. (Brown 2003: 26)

At no stage does this process result in a "simple representation of an object that exists independently of its account" (Tyler and Strecker, this volume), any more than does ethnography. For

> Models and theories are anchored to reality through analogical relationships constrained by observation and reasoning, and their truth content is judged in terms of correspondence with knowledge gained through those capacities, not by correspondence with a mind-independent reality. (Brown 2003: 187)

What distinguishes the natural sciences from the human ones is not that they are less analogical in their ways of describing or theorizing things, but that they have more well-developed "observation systems" for constituting the "things" as objects of investigation, and for producing what Rorty (1987) calls "unforced agreement" among the scientific community about the adequacy or inadequacy of given theoretical accounts in light of the observational evidence. If the human sciences are necessarily less rigorous in this regard, it is not because their subject matter is any less substantial than that of the natural sciences, but because it is more complex, and in particular because it includes phenomena that are of the same order as that which is trying to comprehend them, as discussed above and as illustrated by aspects of the argument in *The Nuer* and *The Religion of Java*.

This being the case, we can see that although the concept of "trope" is one that was originally developed within the fields of "rhetoric" and "poetics," and although those fields were originally established in contradistinction to ones dealing with the truth-functional aspects of language, it is a concept that continues to be of use even in an approach to discourse that denies the previous foundational role of that distinction. For the same reason, as shown by a substantial current of anthropological studies over the last thirty years or more (e.g., Sapir and Crocker 1977; Fernandez 1986, 1991; Wagner 2001), it is a concept that is well suited for the study of language and social life in parts of the world where that distinction has played no such role. And as shown by other studies, including many of the ones in this volume, and no doubt in

future volumes in the series, the same is true of many of the other aspects of the classical rhetorical tradition, even if not of the overall body of doctrine in which they once found their place.

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Notes

1. Historian of rhetoric James Murphy (1972: 1) says "rhetoric is an entirely Western phenomenon. As far as one can judge from the surviving evidence, the Greeks were the only people in the ancient world who endeavored to analyze the ways in which human beings communicate with each other. There is no evidence of an interest in rhetoric in the ancient civilizations of Babylon and Egypt, for instance. Neither Africa nor Asia has to this day produced a rhetoric." This statement obviously needs to be taken with a grain of salt insofar as it refers to particular modes of *analysis* rather than the communicative practices to which they are directed. But it is relevant here insofar as it is precisely those modes of analysis, and the question of their cross-cultural applicability, that are at issue.
2. See, for example, Barthes 1970; Burke 1969: 49–182; Kennedy 1963, 1972, 1983; Murphy 1972; Nienkamp 2001: 9–77, and most any article in *Rhetorica,* the journal of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric.
3. For the references to the relevant passages in Plato's dialogues, see Nienkamp 2001: 144 n.39.
4. The "rather than" in this formulation of Nienkamp's certainly applies to the view of rhetoric taken by Socrates in the *Gorgias.* As Nienkamp (2001: 28) acknowledges, the dichotomy is less starkly drawn in the *Phaedrus,* where Socrates takes the position that, as Murphy (1972: 25) has put it "the true rhetoric, like dialectic, is the medium of discovery and instruction" (cf. Plato, *The Phaedrus* 260d, 271d–272b). But even in the *Phaedrus,* rhetoric is not said to be a medium for discovering the truth. Rather, Socrates, when personifying *Rhētorikē* and allowing her to speak in her own defense, has her say "my advice, for what it's worth, is to take me up only after mastering the truth" (*The Phaedrus,* 260d). See also note 22 below.
5. I say "usually or always" because Austin himself is equivocal on this point, tending

more toward the "always" formulation than the "usually" one. For example, as one of the grounds for putting aside his initial performative/constative distinction, Austin in Lecture XI argues in detail (136–140) that "statements [i.e., 'constative' utterances] are liable to every kind of infelicity that performatives are liable to" (136). Toward the end of that lecture he asks, "What is finally left of the distinction of the performative utterance and the constative utterance?" In terms of the three-way distinction he has introduced among dimensions of the speech act, he answers: "With the constative utterance we abstract from the illocutionary (let alone the perlocutionary) aspects of the speech act, and we concentrate on the locutionary: moreover, we use an oversimplified notion of correspondence with the facts—oversimplified because essentially it brings in the illucutionary aspect. This is the ideal of what would be right to say in all circumstances, for any purpose, to any audience, etc. Perhaps it is sometimes realized" (145–46). In other words, I take Austin to be saying, in his characteristically droll Oxford manner, "Probably it is never realized"—the further implication being that in real life, there is no such thing as truth-functionality pure and simple.

6. For a detailed examination of how social agency is constructed and contested through language use in a New Guinea Highland setting, see Merlan and Rumsey (1991).
7. Curiously, the notion of "need" is introduced here by Kennedy without justification: although his use of the definite article *the* would normally be taken to imply that there has been a previous mention of *need,* or use of some other term that implies it, here this is in fact not the case.
8. True, Kennedy does go on to say that "The rhetorical energy of an utterance can spark a reaction in the audience" (1998: 215) but in his account this is only because "the utterance can either threaten or seem to offer an opportunity to advance the self-interest of the audience" (1998: 215). In other words, the utterance is in the first instance "individual" (per the definition above) and can contingently become social insofar as it may impinge upon the interests of others. This formulation fails to take account of the way in which "the individual" is inherently social. As another leading theorist of rhetoric has put it: "What has been too often overlooked or understated in rhetorical studies is that when our words and images remake our past, present or future, they also remake the personae of those of us who accept the new realities. You and I are remade as we encounter the remakings" (Booth 2004: 17).
9. See Agha (1997) for an excellent demonstration of this point based on a close analysis of a U.S. presidential debate. Agha not only shows that more than one thing is going on at once in the debate, but that apparently contradictory things are going on at once, namely, "aggression" and "politeness" and that these are systematically related to each other.
10. Consider for example the following questions put by Socrates to Phaedrus: "Well, then, isn't the rhetorical art, taken as a whole, a way of directing the soul by means of speech, not only in the lawcourts and on other public occasions but also in private? Isn't it one and the same art whether its subject is great or small, and no more to be held in esteem—if it is followed correctly—when its questions are serious than when they are trivial? (Plato 1995: 261A–261B).
11. For argument's sake here, following Kennedy I have used the term *genre* as if its meaning and cross-cultural applications were clear-cut. But that is actually not the case, for reasons well exposed by Briggs and Bauman (1992).
12. This point has been well made by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969: 6–8) in order to justify their inclusion of, and primary focus on, written genres (as opposed to

the classical rhetorical focus on speech-making) in their magisterial study *The New Rhetoric*.

13. It is not quite true to say that this view of the matter has been held to the complete exclusion of all others within the Western tradition. For, as shown by Nienkamp (2001), there has also been a significant strand of that tradition that has recognized that processes of deliberation and persuasion do not go on only *between* or *among* people, but also *within* the person, as a key process in the formation of the psyche. But there is a big difference between noticing such a process and taking full account of its implications for a theory of rhetoric. Nienkamp's work shows that the latter did not really happen until the modern age of what she calls "expansive rhetoric" (2001: 3), or what Bender and Wellbery (1990) call "rhetoricality." I agree with Bender and Wellbery, and will argue the point below, that there is less continuity than meets the eye between these modern takes on discourse and those of classical rhetoric.
14. Tyler and Strecker (this volume, introduction) define rhetoric as "practices of discourse that enable communication and facilitate both the everyday and the critical performance of participants."
15. At Stanford University, for example, the anthropologists have split themselves along those lines into two separate departments, one a "Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology" and the other a "Department of Anthropological Sciences"—a split that, interestingly, cuts across all three subdisciplines of sociocultural anthropology, archaelogy, and anthropological linguistics.
16. There were two partially distinct streams to this movement, pioneered by Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown. Neither of these men used the term *synchronic functionalism* for what he was doing, but both were happy to call themselves "functionalists." The Radcliffe-Brown stream after his death became known as "structural functionalism" and the Malinowskian one has sometimes been called "psychological functionalism." I add the qualifier *synchronic* to highlight what was common to both (and to the new linguistics that had earlier been pioneered by Saussure), namely, the rejection of the previously dominant diachronic or evolutionist approaches in favor of ones that sought to explain sociocultural phenomena in terms of their relations to other contemporaneous phenomena.
17. And perhaps the first published ethnographic work of this kind, the other main contender being Malinowski (1913), which, however, is based entirely on secondary sources.
18. According to Burton (1992: 132) Evans-Pritchard, no doubt with tongue in cheek, "insisted late in his life that he was a Catholic Marxist."
19. Compare, for example, the following two passages, the first from chapter 3 on "Time and Space," and the second from chapter 5 on "The Lineage System": "[O]ecology limits and in other ways influences [Nuer] social relations, but the value given to oecological relations is equally significant in understanding their social system, which is a system within the oecological system, partly dependent on it and partly existing in its own right" (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 94); "Through the recognition of agnatic relationship between exogamous clans and of cognatic and mythological ties between exogamous clans not considered to be agnates, all the Nuer tribes are by assimilation of political to kinship values conceptualised as a single social system" (1940: 240). For related uses of the term *value,* across both domains (the "oecological" and the "social" or "political"), see pp. 6, 15, 19, 21, 27, 30-31, 40, 48, 81, 90, 93–94, 102, 109–110, 114, 135, 137–138, 142, 147–149, 160–161, 190, 198, 203, 211, 218, 225, 228–229, 231, 240, 255, 260–261, 263–264, 266.

20. In Rumsey (2004: 281) I put this characterization in stronger terms, calling this passage "in retrospect breathtakingly panglossian." In an e-mailed response to the article, Geertz said "My only reservation is the comment about 'panglossianism:' that envoi closure was, I would think, obviously intended as a (worried) hope, not an empirical prediction. After hundreds of pages describing contrasts and tensions I wanted to close with a 'best wishes' departure toward the people I worked with. Things of course got much worse than even I, an historical pessimist in any case, certainly no Leibniz, contemplated, though I certainly knew there was real trouble on the trail ahead. I just felt, and feel, a moral obligation to hope: and, at least at the moment (Susilo has just been elected), things look a bit better" (C. Geertz, personal communication, e-mailed 10 October 2004).
21. After submitting this paper for publication, Brown commented in a letter to his supervisor Rivers that it "does not contain any attempt at interpretation" (Kuper 1988: 79; cf. Rumsey 2004: 272–73).
22. The *locus classicus* here is Socrates' final summing argument in the Phaedrus: "First, you must know the truth concerning everything you are writing or speaking about. … Then, and only then will you be able to use speech artfully … either in order to teach or in order to persuade" (Plato 1995: 83, 277B–C).
23. The subtitle of *The Nuer* is "A Description of the modes of livelihood and political institutions of a Nilotic people." Compare (1940: 3): "I describe in this volume the ways in which a Nilotic people obtain their livelihood, and their political institutions"; "The inquiry is directed at two ends: to describe the life of the Nuer, and to lay bare some of the principles of their social structure" (p. 7); "I do not make far reaching claims. I believe that I have understood the chief values of the Nuer and am able to present a true outline of their social structure, but I regard, and have designed, this volume as a contribution to the ethnology of a particular area rather than as a detailed sociological study, and I shall be content if it is accepted as such" (p. 15).
24. In the following sentence Evans-Pritchard (ibid) adds that "in case it be said we have only described the facts in relation to a theory of them and as exemplifications of it and have subordinated description to analysis, we reply that this was our intention."
25. Other examples of ethnographies organized in this way include Benedict (1946) *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword,* Bateson (1958) *Naven,* and Wagner (1967) *The Curse of Souw.* In each case the thing or things named in the title of the book is treated as a key symbol that stands in a whole-to-whole relation with the overall subject matter of the book.

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CHAPTER 9

Figuration—a Common Ground of Rhetoric and Anthropology

Philippe-Joseph Salazar

Rhetoric and Its Others[1]

Rhetoric has its own definitions for terms, not to say concepts, that often crop up, as if by themselves, in other disciplines. In fact, one of the enduring features of rhetoric is, as Aristotle would have it, that it is a "technique" that cannot aspire to be a science because it does not have an object of its own. Rhetoric is by essence latitudinarian and the price to be paid is that of being pillaged by the human sciences, which own their objects, or believe that they do. Rhetoric has many Others. It is a way to preserve what has been called by a Spanish rhetorician its "democratic trope" (Gil 2001).

I propose that the main task assigned by the Sophists to rhetoric, that of training citizens in the persuasive contest of opinion, a democratic *Bildung* of "effects" (Cassin 1995), remains valid today and in relation to the study of culture. Rhetoric's complex intellectual history is common knowledge to rhetoric scholars, although, at times, it is apparent that writers outside the field of rhetoric studies have little knowledge of, or little patience with, what rhetoric scholars have proposed in terms of the relationship between rhetoric and culture (for contrasted viewpoints, see Roberts and Good 1993; Cassin 1995; Hariman 1995; Canfora 2002).

Scholars in rhetoric studies are thus often placed in an awkward position. They feel that they have to defend the name of their field of inquiry against popular prejudices that, naturally, filter into academic perceptions. Once this

obstacle is removed, they are faced, at worst, with an obdurate inability of many to think of rhetoric as able to be detached from the study of literature. At best, they are confronted with otherwise learned colleagues offering their version of rhetoric, usually lifted from a dictionary or Rhetoric 101. Since the demise of rhetorical education in Europe roughly a hundred years ago, rhetoric scholars have had first to atone for having been, supposedly, agents of obscurantism (this is most virulent in France, see Salazar 2003 and 2007), then to regain lost ground by channeling their efforts through the Classics (mostly in Europe) or communication studies (in the United States). Toward the mid-1960s they set about to discover new objects and territories and methods (heralded by Chaim Perelman, Roland Barthes, and Marc Fumaroli in Europe) and, latterly, to carve out disciplinary niches for themselves (*Philosophy and Rhetoric* 2009). These, at times, bear only a vague family likeness to one another although they all carry the same *rhetoric* label (American West Coast–style cultural studies have little common ground with French-style *études rhétoriques,* however diverse these may be; and "rhetoric" at Berkeley is not "rhetoric" at Northwestern).

A first example of the uneasy relationship rhetoric entertains with sister disciplines can be found in a philosophy that seems to privilege communality, of which I was recently reminded while reviewing a book of collected essays on *Heidegger and Rhetoric* (Gross and Kemmann 2005). In his contribution, the great Heideggerian scholar Otto Pöggeler extemporizes on "Heidegger's Restricted Conception of Rhetoric," and moves deftly from Heidegger's questioning of his own *locus* in the metaphysical tradition, his *Ort* in the common places (shall we say: figures?) of the history of reason—hence engaging in an *Erörterung* (discussion) with the metaphysical tradition— to Heidegger's being unable "to find praxis in the communication of common issues" (170). Pöggeler underscores, without naming it, the flimsiness of Heidegger's historical understanding both of eloquence in the Roman tradition and of rhetoric's place in the Renaissance, which resulted in a one-sided reading of Rhetoric as Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (together with its Christian legacy, Medieval and Reformed), casting aside the Roman tradition. He also shows how this figure of speech, *Ort/Erörterung,* helps obfuscate this very concealment. Was, then, Heidegger's view "restricted" or "constricted " by his own figuration of philology?

A second example is borrowed from history, and is all the more startling in view of the eminence of the author, Bernard Lewis, the great Orientalist. In the course of a lucidly alert essay on "Propaganda in the Pre-Modern Middle East" (Lewis 2004: 84–86), Lewis summons the categories of "eloquence" and "persuasion" and "panegyric." The rhetorical glossary is available, so he uses it, with his customary, persuasively ironical erudition. What is, however, problematic for a reader versed in rhetoric, is his indiscriminate use of this glossary. "Panegyric," for instance, may look like a generic, handy, term, but it is not

generic—if it is doubtless handy: Aristotle made a sharp distinction between praising acts and praising character, a distinction that carries a suite of implications in civil life and in the measurement and understanding of social action. By example, the Dead may be praised, at public funerals, for their deeds of valor in defence, one assumes, of common values—they are "heroes." But to draw an inference from this celebration to the integrity of their character is another matter. For the "average dead" it does not matter, as no one in the public arena will ever truly care to know if a fallen in Iraq was or was not a good person. But if you transfer the argument to public leaders, especially in our age of mass media personalization of power, the ethical problem posed by the two categories of praise becomes critical. The next question should be for the eminent Orientalist to explain if such a distinction exists or not in Islam, or in pre-Islamic Arabic culture. If it does not, why employ the distinction? If it does, what are its actual workings? Indeed, the rhetorical theory of ceremonial orations offers a common object for rhetoric and anthropology, of which, again, rhetoric scholars seem more aware than anthropologists (Carter 1991).

We may further consider Lewis's handling of a ritualistic Friday sermon (Lewis 2004: 85). The immediate problem for those versed in homiletics is whether *sermon* is the correct term. In Post-Tridentine tradition (not to mention the Protestant sermon genre), the sermon is the most achieved form of predication, after the prone. Again, characterizing the Islamic Friday *khuṭba* as a "sermon" is convenient enough, and colloquial enough, and it does help the general reader to "figure out" what is the propagandist drift of this important weekly event in Islamic social life. Yet it falls short of what rhetoric scholars, and readers who have been made aware of the problem, will ask: Are there other forms of Islamic predication that mirror the three forms of Western predication? Is there an Islamic compositional sequence in three stages, from simplicity to complexity, from familiarity to sublime, from gentle rectification to hortatory edification, from addressing the people to haranguing the powerful? Are the social effects ascribed to the *khuṭba* equivalent or analogous to those assigned to, for instance, the prone (typically, a prone, was a brief sermon without a scriptural reading, to explain a point of catechism)?[2] Of course, outside rhetoric studies, these distinctions may well seem pedantic.

From the standpoint of rhetoric studies, they formulate different sets of questions regarding public persuasion, in this case the level of "proximity" between the audience's purported culture and what the predicator needs to demonstrate. Nonetheless, insistence on descriptive distinctions being adequately assigned is what any discipline is supposed to do. It also is the reason why rhetoric's loans to other fields cannot be merely passive and unreflective borrowings by the latter but should be an energizing dialogue between disciplines. This caution would surely apply, as well, to the use of the term *figuration*.

In sum, rhetoric scholars have had to contend with misunderstandings and misconceptions, ignorant patronizing or pondered hostility from within academia (Vickers 1988). With the so-called "rhetorical turn" frontiers have moved but it remains that, more often than not, rhetoric studies and other fields enjoy (if that can be called an enjoyment) an uneasy relationship—especially since the uncrowning of sociology and anthropology as regent disciplines. The rudderless dispersion of the social and human sciences since the 1990s may lead, however, to a regrouping along more fluid lines, such as those of the Rhetoric Culture project.

What Do Rhetoricians Mean by Tropes and Figures?

Let me clarify this by reference to a rhetorician's chapter and verse, Quintilian's *Oratorical Institution.* When dealing with rhetoric and its place in politics I always remind myself that Quintilian received consular honors and was one of the great imperial pedagogues and, in modern parlance, the first holder of a state professorship in rhetoric. If ever a rhetorician had to "figure out" the placement of his art within civil and social life, under severe imperial constraints, it was he. His *Institution* may look somewhat academic, in the eighteenth-century sense of the word, yet if one steps back and recasts one's mind, it is very much the equivalent of Pierre Bourdieu's *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (which may well also look evasive, trite, academic in two thousand years).

This is how Quintilian defines "figure:" *Figura*, *sicut nomine ipso patet, est conformatio quædam orationis, remota a communi et primum se offerente ratione* (9.1.4–5).[3] A literal, and rather cumbersome, translation gives the following: "Figure, as the word says it, is a certain conformation of speech removed from a thinking commonly shared and presenting itself first." Regarding "trope," Quintilian expresses a received opinion when he mentions, in the next sentence, that "*in tropis ponuntur verba alia pro aliis,* "as for the tropes it is a matter of replacing words by other words." It is already easy to perceive how some in rhetoric studies, including myself, feel disquiet at the way that *trope* seems to have gained the upper hand, even among our own kind. The word *trope* has come to have much stylistic allure, while *figure* often seems flat and awkward—*scheme,* Greek for *figure,* never managed to gain the same appeal. Quintilian himself is aware of all this and devotes many passages to the inflationary debates around *figure.* In any case, whatever the merits or demerits of *trope* it is worth reflecting back on the definition of *figure* since both terms are often taken as interchangeable. I am, it should be remarked, setting aside the specialized meanings of *trope* in traditional modal logic, and in modern

Anglo-American philosophy, as an equivalent to "concrete property," although it is worth noting a puzzling commutability between oratorical and logical idioms, of which the use of the term *predication* is another example.

Indeed, to go back to the definition of "figure," Quintilian's epigrammatic phrasing, "*oratio*" balancing "*ratio,*" is not simply a way the Latin language elegantly resolves the difficulty of translating polysemous Greek *logos* (Cassin, et al. 2004). *Ratio* is a difficult term, which denotes "calculation, reasoning, method, manner." Contrary to *logos* it does not denote "speech." Quintilian's definition is therefore a way to signify that, in the process of producing "fictions" (*fiction, figure,* which are of the same etymon) aimed at producing persuasion and social action (a rhetorical action is fulfilled only when it is acted upon by the audience or part if it), through scenarios for decision making, "figures" of speech behave like "calculations" that both depart from "common" thinking and give formulations to that which does not "present itself first" to current, and common, opinion.

Figure allows for a reshaping (*conformatio*) not of language but of taken-for-granted thinking, and argument (that is: lack thereof). The orator stands as a gateway, as it were, to allow this ushering in of a new "conformation" which, if the figure is used effectively in the persuasive act, should result in the proposed "fiction" (do, judge, value, this or that) becoming an action, a reality. Actually, a standard in rhetoric is to activate figures at the conclusion of a speech, when emotional identification is needed, either by evoking pity or indignation. This is done once authority-based and logic-based evidence, of the kind that requires sustained attention, and hence incurs the risk of attention lapses, have been cleared out of the way. The aim of this process lies in allowing a "fiction," a persuasive scenario (let's do this, let's condemn her, let's celebrate this) to pass into social, political, civil life and to become in turn what is never was before, "common knowledge"—common for having been acted upon, knowledge of the kind indicated in the expression *commonplace.*

Rhetorical Analysis Between Philosophy and Positivism

However, this leads to my next point, that the intersection of social action and rhetoric was understood, though not clearly explicated, by Durkheim and Mauss. They authored or co-authored many programmatic essays with this lack of clarity, here accepting and there denying rhetoric. The main reason I see for their, at once, acceptance and denial of rhetoric lies in the polemical history of the relationship between philosophy and rhetoric on one hand, and the sustained interest expressed by French founders of positivist social sciences education on the other.

This is not to mention yet another triangulation, which became far more apparent after the Second World War, between law, rhetoric, and sociology.[4] Let us not forget that Durkheim's lectureship, then chair, at the Sorbonne was in pedagogy—teachers' training. On this he wrote perhaps not originally but, as was to be expected from him, professionally, that is with a Republican sense of civic dedication (Durkheim 1922: 126)—at a time when, following the strict separation of state and church, positivists naturally entertained the notion that the Republic had now achieved the moment of rational emancipation, notably in social matters, a movement already begun in 1789. Mauss, reflecting on Durkheim's career, offers profound remarks on the relevance of this pedagogical emphasis for social thinking (Mauss 1969, vol. III: 485-488), which both he and Durkheim extend even to an understanding of international relations (see introduction to *The Public-Javnost* 2005).

In any event, it is remarkable how rhetoric exited French intellectual education at the very same time that philosophy secured its supremacy and while "sociology," broadly defined, slowly but surely sought to displace nonpositive inquiry, philosophy, and philosophy of society and culture, in particular. In the process, manners of speaking about disciplines became less specific, methods or at least tools were borrowed, and professional claims were staked. In curricular terms, rhetoric, which was the crowning part of secondary education from 1809 to 1902, was deeply affected. Its importance was recognized until 1904 in the *Concours général,* a national competition between the best final-year secondary pupils.[5] The final examination in French consisted in three exercises, straight from rhetoric: a narrative, an epistle, a speech. In 1890, the speech component was replaced by an essay (*dissertation*), a new form invented for the purpose of the philosophy examination in 1864, and fixed in 1866 by Charles Bénard (*Petit traité de la dissertation philosophique*). In 1902 the supersession of rhetoric by philosophy became complete, and the *dissertation* form moves rapidly across the humanities, setting the standard for rational analysis (Salazar 2003 and 2005b). By contrast, we see the rise of the positivist art of describing social facts as exemplified by Mauss and particularly in his unfinished essay on prayer and oral rituals (*La Prière,* 1909) being withdrawn from publication (Mauss 1969, vol. I: 357–477). When he comes to show how he proceeds, he moves from definition to observation and to explanation. In other words he proposes an alternative expository method based on social facts. This, however, will never gain in France the stature and standing that the *dissertation* way of going about explaining ideas, and their relation to facts, still enjoys today. This strained relationship between discursive modes accounts for French *anthropologie sociale et culturelle*'s oscillation between styles of exposition, and also for its arrogation to itself of both the (universal) virtues of philosophy[6] and the particularizing energy of micro-observation,

in what Mauss named "social physiology," of the social body. Odd as it seems to the outsider, this latter preoccupation is, for the rhetoric scholar, eminently rhetorical.

From Mauss to Bourdieu: The Figure of the Anthropologist as Rhetor

To make this point let me resort here to the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. In an interview published in *Choses dites* and pointedly entitled, in English, "Fieldwork in philosophy," he defines his own passage from philosophy to social anthropology: "I thought I was a philosopher and it took me a long time to realize that I had become an anthropologist" (Bourdieu 1987: 16–17). Some, of course, would deny he is either. He himself, in fact, recognizes this denial when he writes, also in *Choses dites,* that, contrary to American social sciences, which he calls a "simulation," his own method is *englobante,* a circumventing and embracing tactic that brings into play "open, suggestive and evocative" concepts. Whatever the validity of both claims, the rhetorical issue lies in the distinctions he feels he has to make. Let us read, as it were, the first quote through the lenses of the second: the transformation of a philosopher into a social scientist implies shedding—that which is the pride of philosophy, that is, the arguing from recognized premises and the moving from known to unknown. Bourdieu here in identifying his method as *englobante* has, indeed, left philosophy to adopt a method that, traditionally, philosophy rejects as "rhetorical," that is to say "sophistical."

The rhetorical key to Bourdieu's *praxis* may be found in Mauss. In 1900, Mauss (with Paul Fauconnet) provided the *Grande Encyclopédie,* another form of the emerging sociological school's educational involvement in the construction of the Republic, with a terse definition of sociology: "Sociology," they wrote, is a "Word coined by Auguste Comte to denote the science of societies" (Mauss 1969, vol. III: 139–176).[7] He then moves to propose a distinction between philosophical inquiry and "positive" inquiry, a distinction that he uses to contrast argumentative gestures and to distinguish between "justification" and "intelligibility." Sociology, for Mauss, need not justify its right to exist, as it has intelligible rules for discovering the intelligibility of social action. This intelligibility is anchored in Durkheim's rules. Following these rules, sociology "reveals concordances" and "unsuspected regularities." These rules are, of course, valid for anthropology as well.

In a later *Note de méthode* Mauss adds this claim: "The science of societies is far from existing fully. It does not even come close to the state biological sciences were in a hundred years ago. … [However] it is far ahead of them

in terms of its positive spirit" (Mauss 1969, vol. III: 294). In other words, the imperfect approximation of social facts by a science still developing its tools is better than sciences from which its first tools are being borrowed. The difference or the tension here lies in the way in which the sociological and anthropological method deals with phenomena—"pure social phenomena," Mauss calls them. And he adds, in the *Grande Encyclopédie* paper: "The precise characteristic of social nature is that it is added to individual nature. It expresses itself through ideas and actions, which, although we participate in their production, are totally imposed on us from the outside. Our task is to discover the signs of this exteriority" (Mauss 1969, vol. III: 148).

But is this what rhetoric is all about and what Bourdieu, who more often than not is a keen philologist like many French social scientists, calls "representation" (Bourdieu 1987: 41). Bourdieu has the forensic sense of the word in mind—advocacy, evocation of realities through arguments, "figuration" indeed. It is accepted knowledge, in rhetoric studies, that "performance" neatly defines what speech—that is, publicly argued speech—does. The meaning of performance need not and cannot be labored on here, although significant references can be made.[8] One will, however, note the propinquity between "figure" as a "conformation" and rhetoric action as "performance." To put it in a formula: a so-called "public figure" performs conformations of signs.

Anthropology, as a central task, argues about social facts as social signs. There, in that task lies, in the eyes of rhetoric studies, the analogy between rhetoric and anthropology. The orator "performs" a fact, a case, a value by using various arguments, defined by Aristotle as "signs," for the reason stated earlier on in this essay, namely, that a persuasive argument must signify something the audience can recognize although it may not "present" itself "commonly." Hence the employment of "figures," or "tropes" if you wish, in order to manifest the fact (deliberative action) or case (forensic action) or value (epideictic action) at stake. In this persuasive process, the facts and values represented by an argument take shape under the eyes of the audience as if they were real objects, that is, as something that has reality outside the oratorical argument. For instance, evidence constructed through logical discourse replaces and outdoes material evidence, although the latter might be used to stir emotions more effectively. Similarly, rhetoric studies would argue, based on the Maussian definition, that the anthropologist fabricates social facts with signs, which are the end products of a process of logical induction. Mauss exemplifies the inductive method in his *Manuel d'ethnographie* (1947), particularly as it is employed in questionnaires.

The inductive method looks empirical and positive enough so long as one wishes to forget that it responds to a *praxis,* the practice of persuasion. Traditionally, in a forensic or deliberative demonstration, less so in an epideictic

speech, persuasion works by using inartistic proofs and artistic proofs. Inartistic or atechnic proofs—whether you choose to reference the Latin or the Greek—are elements of evidence that exist outside the "art," the "technique," of rhetorical demonstration (a witness, an affidavit, statistics, reports, and the like). The orator uses them but does not produce them. By contrast, the orator first discovers himself artistic/entechnic proofs (the *inventio* process) and then uses them as he sees fit in order to produce representation and, finally, persuasion.

In turn, artistic proofs are of three categories: "Some are found in the character of the speaker" (Aristotle, *Rhetoric,* I 1365a); they are called "ethical." Some are found in accommodating to the audience; they are called of the "passions," or pathetic. Some are found in the argument itself; they are of the "logical" sort. These last arguments (*logoi*) can in their turn be fabricated in three ways: by examples, by enthymemes, and by signs. The point here, in relation to the Maussian method, is that these three artistic arguments are inductive, yet each one induces in a different manner. The example, or paradigm, is an analogical induction based on the frequency of an event; the enthymeme is an induction derived from the repetition of similar facts (formally, it takes the form of an incomplete syllogism); the sign induces by linking a particular fact to a general one. I must stress that the reality of a fact, in the case, for example, where there is a rhetorical buildup to advocate a policy or prove a case or celebrate a value, rests on this third, logical category of artistic proof.

The ethical and pathetic effects function at another level: they affirm that those who speak are able to do so prudentially and make a given, not any, audience "feel" the virtue of the argument. Inductive proofs allow for the fabrication, or "conformation" or "figuration" of scenarios, and yet, without the added agency of arguments by the ethical and/or by pathos, they are likely not to be transferred into action and therefore to remain mere "fictions," however potent. They are not likely to become active, concrete, material realities.

As is known, Mauss opens the chapter on aesthetics in his *Manuel d'ethnographie* by a recall of the Aristotelian theory of syllogism and figure (Mauss 1947: 98–99). Of course, as he is not a rhetorician he has lost track of the complexity of what the long debates around the performativity of rhetoric have been. But he remains aware that, at least, such discarded tools are still strewn around. I am not faulting Mauss for this. I am just pointing out how early French anthropology, with regard to rhetoric, was treading, unawares, on ground already covered in the long history of rhetoric studies and thus was missing a good opportunity to reflect more profoundly on a notion such as "figuration." And I am also pointing out how later and more recent French anthropology (in particular that of Bourdieu) still reworks concepts of "fic-

tion" for which rhetoric scholars have, if not provided answers, at least posed important questions.

A Case Where Rhetoric and Ethnography Meet: South Africa

I would like now to offer one example of how anthropology and rhetoric can, as it were, find fertile common ground, on the question of "figuration." It is drawn from the recent history of South Africa, its reconciliation process to be more precise. I wish not to paraphrase here my own commentary on the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Salazar 2004a) but simply to offer one, single illustration of how a rhetorical analysis can meet an anthropological concern, without suffering dilution or sycophancy.

Central to the reconciliatory process are the so-called "perpetrators" who committed vile crimes ("gross abuses of human rights," says the law) that, had the Commission not existed, would have been prosecuted at the very least under criminal law, and at most as crimes against humanity, as genocide, and even perhaps as war crimes. The touchstone crime against humanity, at least in the South African context, to kill someone because s/he is black (or white), was not made an object of judicial rhetoric, with its perverse yet "democratic" exchange of evidence and counter-evidence. That may well have left quite a few perpetrators off the proverbial hook. But it was indeed made an object of the "accounts" offered or the "story-telling" of perpetration. Perpetrators came forward voluntarily, probably attracted by the certitude that eventually they would automatically be granted amnesty. There were conditions to their making their story public: that it should be fully "their" story is what mattered first; that it should be demonstrated that their motive was purely political, the idea here being that only an assassin who had political integrity, in the sense that the crime served what the criminal believed to be the political nature of apartheid, could become a democratic citizen with analogous integrity; that it should be demonstrated that they acted as part of a wider, organized decision-making political agency, that is, their actions could not be individual, only communal.[9] The amnesty obtained through reconciliation, however, does not entail, like traditional political amnesty, a judicial cancellation of the crime. The effect of political amnesty, in most Western juridical systems, is to expunge the crime itself and whoever reveals it is liable for prosecution—for instance, French war collaborators who received amnesty (see Cassin 2001). In the South African case, this reconciliation-driven amnesty makes "perpetration" a matter of public record. Contrary to what has happened in Argentina, following an analogous yet different-in-purpose process,[10] "perpetrators" have

not been hunted down by victims or avengers, placarded by neighbors or activists bent on exposing them. In South Africa, assassins and torturers have exposed themselves voluntarily, and been reintegrated into civic life as free agents. If they have accused themselves freely, they are reintegrated into their lives freely, such is the entailment. Some of them have even become apartheid's latter-day stars and, sometimes, the new South African democracy's newfound heroes. They have even earned the respect due to those, appropriate in a Protestant culture, who know when and how and to whom one can say "sorry." Paul Ricoeur has remarkably analyzed, in one of his last essays, the crux of this process: this is a reversal of vengeance (Ricoeur 2004a).

The most publicized events of the Commission's hearings, those that captivated the wider public's attention, were moments of theatrical repentance expressed and forgiveness granted. I use *theatrical* in the sense of Derrida in his last, memorable, essay, on the Commission, where he offers a reading of the staging of the Commission hearings as a commentary to the Hegelian conceit of Africa being outside "the effective world stage" (*auf dem wirklichen Theater der Weltgeschichte*) (Derrida 2004: 133). To repent and to forgive was not, however, within the purview of the law, which considered, in granting amnesty, only three elements, beyond the odiousness of the act: its political motivation, its group-based commandeering, and its "full disclosure." In turn, the Commission, in its public hearings where perpetrators and victims came face to face, staged its proceedings to theatrical effect. To repent and to forgive were processes that placed perpetrator and victim face to face, although it could be the victim's community or parents who played by surrogacy, and in rhetorical terms, the role of "advocates," or representations of the dead—I have analyzed this elsewhere as the question of *onus,* that is, the transfer of the "burden" (Salazar 2004a: 58–63).

In any event, the moment of repentance expressed and forgiveness solicited was, indeed, a figuration of exoneration. The *onus,* the burden of crime, passed from perpetrator to victim, "exited" the perpetrator to pass onto the victim, now laden with a new burden, that of exercising justice, a spiritual justice, perhaps, but leaving the victims unable to "exorcise" their burdens. In short, it was the adding of a moral—religious, in fact—*onus* to the weight of sufferings. Social action, and reconciliation, took place in this oddest of "exonerating translations," which, to reflect back onto the rhetorical definition given earlier on, is, indeed, a *figura,* a verbal "conformation" that makes real what is not thought of immediately and commonly. In this case, the perpetrator unloads guilt and "figures as" the origin of reconciliation. Victims are displaced to a lesser role, in spite of political, religious, and communal public expressions of support; they are, literally, "bearing witness"—that is to say, bearing the burden of witness.[11]

One can only ask why this is so? In a way, perpetrators are novel figures of "founding fathers." If we take the figure of speech "perpetrator" seriously and recognize that it allows for not saying or avoids saying "criminal," we see that it highlights in the collective mind the fact that the reconciliatory process is not penal but what I have termed "proclamatory" (Salazar 2004b: 59–65). And this realization, in turn, directs us to where it originates in Roman civic religion. And in that origination we are enabled to realize how the perpetrator's proclamation enters into a tradition of gestures—from the religious, fatherly function of the *pater* (termed *patria potestas*), to that of "patron" as paraclete, to those paternal acts that help to define what is common to the group (that is, the *patria,* civic territory), right on down to actions of *patrare,* which only the pater in his various manifestations can truly and effectively perform. For example, to take an oath one must be fully able to back it up with material action. Thus the *perpetrator,* one who can do just that, *patrare* (perform), right through (*per-)* to the end (see Salazar 2002b).

Returning to the definition of *figura* and to the Latin balancing of *ratio* and *oratio,* the calculus of mental representation and the habitus on the one hand, and verbal formations on the other, I would like to suggest that these South African perpetrators demonstrate, on the stage of the Commission's public hearings, in all its "ob-scenity"—this "jutting out" from the stage onto the political and public arena—how figurations can outdo formulations, in this case, how the triple criterion in granting amnesty has produced an unexpected "conformation" of popular sentiment, forcing people to suddenly reflect on what it is to forgive privately for the public common good.

Paul Ricoeur has warned against these trite "duties of memory" that pass today for a deepening of democracy and against those perversions to which these theatrical reconciliation events bear witness (Ricoeur 2004b: 494–506). He bases his analysis on Augé's study of African rituals of forgetting (Augé 1998). But these rituals from anthropological work pale in comparison with the complexity, and civic efficacy, of this movement of clemency, a movement that lies astride the three canonical modes of rhetoric: judicial rhetoric (evidence/counter-evidence), deliberative rhetoric (private pardon that is publicly framed and has wider, political implications), and epideictic rhetoric (it shows off what values are). Naturally, for a rhetoric scholar, each one of these three moves embody the three levels of time apposite to each sort of rhetorical act: judicial-like in which pardon expresses a mental representation of the past; deliberative-like, in which pardon sets in motion later moves (it is future-, one may even say "policy-"oriented, as in the question of reparations, for instance); and epideictic-like, insofar as the hearing where pardon was solicited (or its solicitation withheld) and granted (or refused) aims at putting the audience in the presence of social values embodied in reconciliation. Epideictic action sus-

pends time: a speech represents or de-monstrates (*demonstratio* = *epideixis*) a set of values endowed, by the magic of persuasion, with an enduring presence.

In sum, the perpetrator restages his cruelty in words and often by imitating his actions, thus activating the two Aristotelian modes of poetic representation—epic and dramatic—and, at the same time, endorsing a multiple oratorical role. At a mere judicial-like level, he is witness of his own actions, he is his own accuser and, sometimes, he passes judgment on himself and even his own "sentencing"—I will do this or that to repair the damage I caused. His position is unique indeed. Anthropologists would recall how Mauss and Benveniste described the borderline character of sacred people, standing on/at the limit of death and life, at/on the limit demarcating the world of men and the world of gods. I venture to say that perpetrators are "sacred," *sacer,* as "they bear an un-washable stain, revered and despised, object for veneration and causes for horror" (Benveniste 1969: 188, my translation; in which he refers to Mauss's *Essai sur la nature et les fonctions du sacrifice* in Mauss 1968, vol. I: 193–307). When a perpetrator restages his actions on the proscenium of the Commission, he makes, indeed, two worlds communicate, that of the dead and that of the living, that of apartheid and that of reconciliation. The Roman saying, "he who violated justice be sacred," implies that common justice cannot be evoked in his case, so great is his violence, and his violation, of justice. The "sacred" criminal remains literally out of human touch, judicially out of the bounds of the law, yet he is to be subjected to a major sort of justice—that of "the gods." In the South African case, it is that of the Commission. All this allows me to suggest that the Commission was indeed performing a kind of "liturgy" for and with the people, provided that we reflect on the dual definition of "people" either as *dêmos* (by social, common condition) or as *laos* (by ritual, mutual consent—*liturgy* means service by the *laos*) (Salazar 2004a: 18).

The crimes of apartheid, thereby, remain untouchable, sacred—unprosecuted, indeed[12] — yet they must be staged, and minutely so (down to having the worst, most vulgar, criminals precisely reenact gestures of torture, in front of their very victims), in an energetic production of evidence no usual trial can ever provoke, in "hearings" that are intended to produce healing. Perpetrators make past and present communicate: their accounts lead to public deliberation, to civic knowledge, to civil pondering of what politics becomes when it abandons common boundaries. Perpetrators are, in other words, "figures," however "terrible,"[13] of the foundation of society. The word *terrible* is taken here in its precise meaning: those are terrible who exact "terror," that is, the right, or *jus terrendi,* to "terrify away" those who are not perceived as belonging to that which, in the very gesture of "terror," is constituted as the former's "territory." Perpetrators are "terrible" inasmuch as they embodied, were and remain figurations of the territorial terror exerted by "apart-heid," violently "setting apart" people.

Conclusion

To conclude, let me stress that rhetoric's enterprise, even when it is improperly apprehended by outsiders in terms of its inner workings, is often correctly appraised by them in terms of its general drift. Rhetoric does not seem to concern itself with local cultures. Its purview is general inasmuch as it carries within itself a general understanding of a unique form of the social arrangement of intercommunication, democracy. Even under the Roman imperial republic, rhetoric managed to retain this (by then utopian) function by channeling it through ceremonial rhetoric. When harnessed, after much reluctance by the dominant ideology, to religious propaganda, it preserved its initial democratic impulse.[14] Indeed, in applying rhetorical analysis to local cultures, one should be aware that this democratic energy remains at work. Whether it leads or not to the sort of "profession change" that Bourdieu talks about is questionable, although such a change took place, some time ago, in my own case and in that of several of my fellow writers—what is now known as "the French school of rhetoric."[15] What has become unquestionable, however, is the restoration of rhetoric's efficacy: Tunisian philosopher and sociologist Abdelwahab Meddeb, author of *The Malady of Islam* (2003), recently pointed out how rhetoric could help "treat [in the double meaning of "to study" and "to cure"] images Europeans and Muslims have of one another, deposited in their cultural memory" (2007, 66). I rest my case.

Notes

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1. I borrow this heading from that of a conference held at the Sorbonne (Paris), in June 2006 (selected proceedings appear in *Littérature* 149, March 2008).
2. Philip Halldén in his rich essay "What is Arabic Rhetoric?" (2005) is guilty of the same "learned ignorance" he accuses Orientalists to evince when they deal with rhetoric: for instance, his understanding of Late Renaissance – Seventeenth Century continental rhetoric is framed by privileging a small aspect of it, Protestant Ramism, as he fails to fully measure the complex and long-lasting impact of Catholic homiletics. He jumps from a simplistic definition of rhetoric (p. 26) to Descartes ("platonizing"?) and Kant—quoting a manual for undergraduates while, quite clearly, he does have access to scholarly sources.
3. Classical referencing follows normal usage, without mention of edition.
4. In the work of C. Perelman (1976) (see Salazar 2005).
5. Yet only until 1890 for the literary part of the *baccalauréat* (examinations at the end of secondary education, giving access to university education).
6. More often than not grounded, surely in France, in a social praxis—indeed, Mauss was a militant Socialist.
7. Translations are mine, unless otherwise mentioned.

8. On fiction as democracy's performance, see Cassin 1995. On political action as performance, see Hariman 1993. On foundational performance in democratic action, see Salazar 2002.
9. There is a denial of privacy in this requirement that I cannot deal with in this essay.
10. As referenced in the Argentinian report *Nunca Mas* (1998).
11. See the analysis by anthropologist Fiona Ross (2003).
12. Disclosed crimes are unprosecuted; those found through police investigation, if valid, are being prosecuted.
13. On this I refer to my Introduction (Salazar, 2004a, 50–51) and to my presentation at the Constitutional Court of South Africa (Salazar, 2005a).
14. The reliance on Thomistic dialectics since Leo XIII's encyclical *Æterni Patris,* 1879, by the papacy must be understood as an antidote against rhetoric, and public deliberation, against democracy quite simply.
15. The journal *Philosophy and Rhetoric* will issue in Fall 2009 a special volume (also as a paperback) on this "school," with contributions by, among others, Bruno Latour and Barbara Cassin.

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CHAPTER 10

Tropical Foundations and Foundational Tropes of Culture[1]

James W. Fernandez

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

We might first found the tropological point of view in social science inquiry in two ancient founding figures, the Pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus and the Roman Rhetorician Quintillian. As with all the contributors to our common Rhetoric Culture project, "social science inquiry" is understood as investigation into the rhetoric of culture creation and social interaction. Heraclitus may be regarded as foundational, not only in his doctrine of flux and constancy of change, but in his view that for the most part, acting under the requirements of social order, cultural constancy, and personal stability, people do not understand fully what is going on around them and most particularly they do not easily recognize those things that are constantly shaping and bringing changes to their lives. We are, Heraclitus argued, "sleep-walkers through life," disinclined to puzzle out the actual turnings of our lives until we inevitably stumble upon them. If we examine the etymology of our central term, *trope,* we find that at its core, derived from the Greek *tropos* (a turning) or *tropë* (a turn), or *trepein* (to turn), lies the constancy of turning in the world. It follows that the trope is an instrument of that turning and that tropology is an ethnographic and analytic method particularly attuned to the presence of these instruments of turning in "communicative interaction" in society and to their dynamic influence on that action and upon the dynamics of social interaction generally. Tropology is the study of those ambiguous, ambivalent, and inchoate social situations that produce these instruments of turning. It is a study of the associations that tropes evoke and bring to bear and it is a study

dedicated to a fuller understanding of the way that tropes define or redirect, effect, and affect, social interaction in ways that the "sleep walkers" that we are do not fully appreciate.

Heraclitus may have postulated constant flux but he also had metaphysical interests in finding constancy and unity in flux (postulating, as he did, the unity of opposites to accomplish this). His law of flux did not exclude stabilities and constancies. We may never be able to step into the same stream twice as regards the never-ending flow of the watery content, but there is greater constancy in the stream bank and the watercourse itself. Thus while we can never step into the same stream twice, we can step off the same stream bank at least thrice if not over and over again into that constantly changing stream. In that search for metaphysical constancy we move from Heraclitus to Plato, who while he may have regarded the sensible everyday world as in constant if shadowy Heraclitian flux, postulated the underlying immutable forms—the river banks, as it were—that gave shape to that flux.

The other founding figure of antiquity is the Roman rhetorician Quintillian, whose massive *Institutio Oratoria* (99 CA) is *the* compendium of practically all the learning involved in the Graeco-Roman attention to matters of rhetoric in political and social life. Aristotle's *Rhetoric,* Cicero's *Works,* and Quintillian's *Institutio* are the three great texts in classical rhetoric. Central to Quintillian's analytic-pedagogic text are books 8 and 9, in which Quintillian examines and himself gives centrality in rhetoric to the tropes and the figures. Tropology accepts not only much of the definitions and analysis of the tropes and figures as given by Quintillian, but also his emphasis on their place in the ongoing politics and persuasion of daily social life.

Modern tropology, then, while it recognizes the foundational anxiety in Plato's riposte to Heraclitus, accepts Quintillian's view of the central place of the tropes in rhetorical engagements with the self, with the other, and with the world, and thus the ever presence of the figures of speech and thought in "communicative interaction," that is to say, in social interaction. Regarding the Heraclitian recognition, this is to say in respect to this over determined metaphysical search for the unchanging fundaments, as a constant in human intellection and interaction, tropology itself dwells very much more in the ephemerae of the physical, that is, in the relative constancy of turning in daily life. It is a discipline of the field primarily and is not anxious or inspired to posit immutable foundations beyond those provided by the various tropes themselves. As the study of the instruments of turning in human interaction, there is a natural interest in discovering what may be the constancies in this turning process, why the various tropes arise, and how they install themselves in belief and are put into practice. But tropology does not itself wade in for the purpose of positing eternal foundational tropes everywhere present. It is a discipline that seeks

to live in the watery or shadowy flux of everyday life, as it were, and does not rush off to lie upon the banks—or exit from the caves—of that daily experience. Of course, it is a discipline that amid this flux seeks to be introspective, that is, seeks to delve behind the prevalent "sleep walking" in culture so as to discover the relevant tropes at play. So it is that in this very essay itself entitled "foundations of culture" the tropologist recognizes a particular and oft-present and controlling choice of tropes: *culture is a structure,* and *ideas are building blocks.* But our essay might have been just as easily entitled, appealing to a combination of contemporary string theory in cosmological physics and to the well-known web trope in anthropology (culture is that web in which humans are enmeshed and which they themselves have spun), "*The tropical filaments of culture,*" or "*Tropes as the Web and Woof of Culture,*" both of which they are or pretend to be!

Nevertheless, in the history of tropological study stabilizing foundational interests have been recurrent. It is perhaps not surprising that amid the emphasis upon flux, the constancy of change, and the dynamics of human interaction tropology evidences two stabilizing interests: 1) the interest in tropological commonplaces, that is, an interest in the recurrence of certain tropes within culture and across cultures in communicative interaction; and 2) an interest in the possibility that in the cultural content of social life there may be dominant or master tropes which are foundational in the sense that they are recurrently organizing to that life, its interpretations, and its meanings.

Of course, the interest in finding secure foundations for the flux of life is, as we have suggested, ancient, Pre-Socratic. Indeed, foundational tropes were put forward very early in philosophical speculation to stabilize our understanding if only by predicating upon flux entities that were themselves highly unstable: the world is fire, the world is water, etc. In tropology, since Vico at least, there has been an awareness of certain recurrent tropes that constitute foundations of Western understanding both popular (first) and intellectual (subsequently). For Vico these tropes—for example the circle trope of understanding in history—are at once ancient yet still ever-present commonplaces. These were shown, by the "etymological method" that Vico practiced, to have their origins in popular thought and to have gradually worked their way up into the more austere conceptual apparatus of philosophic speculation,[2] which, however sophisticated it may have become, did not escape this foundational dependency in popular thought.

The list of thinkers who have since the Pre-Socratics sought to stabilize the flux of life by predicating upon it various tropes, fire, water, air, the forms, the great circle of history and thought, etc., would be a very long one. Of particular and relatively recent interest is the tendency to talk about these foundational tropes as "root hypotheses" (or "world hypotheses") as seen in the work

of the mid-twentieth-century American philosopher Steven Pepper.[3] Pepper argues for an elemental set of foundational metaphors upon which all philosophy, variously making its choice among them, is based, and he also argues that philosophies that do not recognize this and that mix their foundational metaphors are fundamentally incoherent.[4] Pepper's root hypotheses are of two types, analytic and synthetic. The analytic hypotheses find their foundation in two metaphors: 1) "formism," the metaphor of implicit form in matter and experience, which are or can be realized or exemplified according to plan; and 2) "mechanism," the metaphor of interdependence of discrete parts, whose interdependence can be analyzed and realized in practice. The whole so understood analytically is never more than the sum of its parts. The synthetic metaphors that suggest a whole always greater than the sum of its parts are 3) "contextualism," the root metaphor of which is the historic event whose understanding is always dependent upon and interwoven with the historic context of specific time and place in which the event occurred and evolved. The underlying metaphor suggests the complex interdependence of life events, that is to say, their interwoven quality and dense texture. The final root hypothesis is 4) "organicism," which suggests the vitality obtained by interdependent, non-discrete parts. The trope suggests a vital whole that is always more than the sum of its parts though utterly dependent upon each and every one of them.

Pepper raises many philosophical problems that cannot be treated here, particularly when, while arguing for the discreteness of these four tropical foundations of thought, he also recognizes the degree to which they, almost inevitably, meld or fade into each other and even though he takes such melding as a weakness of argument in philosophy. The point we wish to emphasize here is that Pepper's is an important instance of tropological foundationalism in philosophy. His argument is provocative for any tropology associated with the human and social sciences. For example the organicism hypothesis reminds any social scientist of how recurrent, indeed foundational, the organic trope is in social science argument, and how dependent upon it such argument has been over the centuries. Nisbet (1969) documented fully, from the Greeks to modern scholars, how dependent upon organicism—dependent, that is, upon the organic trope and the metaphor of growth (and decline)—any discussion of change and development in social science has been (and still is).

Another foundational trope of the same kind that is also securely anchored, like the metaphor of growth, in the popular mind, is the "path or "road" metaphor. Consultation of any university library will summon up many hundreds of titles that evoke and launch themselves from this trope. It is interesting that the Russian literary theorist Bakhtin argues in his theory of chronotopes (1981), most pointedly in his essay "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel," how fundamental "the road" metaphor is to thought and that is

because, mainly, it is a particularly salient example of a chronotope. That is to say that "the road" is a particularly revelatory configuration or syncretism of time and space. It is a space over which a narrative and a narrator can move in time toward denouement, revelation, realization, discovery, fulfillment, unrequitement, whatever may be the nature of the final resting place or goal or "journey's end" of a narrative argument carried thus along its path to conclusion and ultimate closure. Narrative in the social sciences, whether it is the narrative of human evolution over the long term or the realization of human projects in the short term, does not easily escape the expressive power and attraction of this configuration—anymore than it can escape the vitality offered to argument by the organic trope.

There has been a dichotomizing tendency in this foundationalism, based very likely on the gender trope, which tends toward identifying, in thinking about the tropes themselves, two basic and fundamentally opposing tropes. This tendency, as is often argued, lies in the elemental dynamics of social distinction and differentiation, the most salient of which is gender distinction. Such a dynamic dualism is seen contemporaneously, for example, in a popular and playful dichotomy in characterological thinking in the United States between the Ice people and the Nice people. The first, the Ice people, are those, the dominant majority Americans, who are of northern European, that is to say, of cold-region extraction and with septentrional character. They are "naturally" of austere nature, cold of manner, and repressed of expression. The second, the Nice People, the various American minorities largely, are mainly derived from southern climes. They are from the warm latitudes, the mezzogiorno or mezzo America. They are buoyant of nature and expressive of manner. One recognizes here the widespread North-South Dichotomy (Fernandez 1998), virtually global in extension; and one also recognizes the wide variety of associated subordinate tropes it has exploited, from ice to hot peppers, pasta, and salsa, to confirm and institute itself in the north-south orientations of popular thought.

To be sure this "dichotomizing practice" (see Gal 1991, and Gal and Irvine 1995) is not simply a popular one, but it finds its place and is played upon among the intellectual classes repeatedly. In respect to the north-south dichotomy it is played upon most notably, and to be sure in an artful way, by the German novelist Thomas Mann in his *Magic Mountain,* with the interpenetration that takes place there between northern European and southern European modes of being. In the philosopher of history Jose Ortega y Gasset, we find this dichotomizing tendency in what he regards as the two great foundational metaphors of intellectual history, or, more precisely, tropes that are foundational in the thinking of thinkers about thinking and intellection in general: the seal and the wax tablet (*el sello y la tabla*) and the container and

the content (*el continente y su contendido*) (Ortega y Gasset 1924). These two metaphors for Ortega convincingly anchor (let us say, given the Spanish maritime tradition) the oceanic move in philosophical epistemology from realism to idealism.

The various tropes employed to anchor or ground, depending on whether one finds oceanic or telluric tropes more convincing, or to give experiential content to such abstract and parsimonious understandings as dichotomies, and which are themselves dichotomized, should not cause us to overlook the interplay of these tropes in everyday social experience. For anthropologists, at least, while the dichotomous anchorage of argument in dichotomies or dualisms or opposites may be recognized as a foundational form of intellection, the task is to show how the tension between the associated foundational tropes enlivening such dichotomies—that is to say, in which the dichotomies are embodied—interact and even interpenetrate in those negotiations in pursuit of understanding that are characteristic of everyday life.

Two recent books addressing the complexities of two European cultures and that take up impressively that ethnographic task are Dale Pesmen's *Russia and Soul,* and Dominic Boyer's *Spirit and System.* These ethnographies, rich with local experience, are both anchored in a study of the relation or dialectic between foundational tropes: soul (*dusha*) and system (*sistema*) in the case of Pesmen, and spirit (*Geist*) and system (*System*) in the case of Boyer. But they are both sensitive to the complex elaborations and interpenetrations that these tropes undergo in daily life and extended ethnographic inquiry. Pesmen (2000: 13) points up the way that tropes tend to stand for each other or meld into each other creating a convincingly "rich interconnection" in the *poesis* of everyday life that the foundational tropes taken or discussed separately or in tandem, or even in dialectical opposition, do not themselves possess. Capturing that rich interconnection is the ethnographic challenge.

Boyer begins with a dichotomy, but he hardly leaves it to stand unchallenged. What interests him is "dialectical knowledge making" and the ways that the dialectic between the key tropes, *Geist* and *System,* lie at the very foundations of German intellectual identity if not German-ness. His detailed ethnography also recognizes that taking these tropes in reification as somehow freestanding and self-explanatory ignores the many ways that, in the dialectic, they meld into other tropes such as in intellections on *Kultur* and *Bildung* and, indeed, gain meaning from these interpenetrations (Boyer 2005: 33–40, and 55–60).

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The foundationalism considered above is that of the tropes of frequent, often enduring employ in culture in giving anchorage or supplementary under-

standing at needful moments of meaning deficit[5] in "communicative interaction." What is being considered are foundational tropes that are detected in social science inquiry in social and historical interaction at both the popular and the intellectual level, with the supposition that most if not all tropes of intellectual use have been of popular origin, and foundational in that sense as well. What is also being considered is the role of the tropes in destabilizing and unsettling, by reason of the search inspired by existing deficits of meaning, previously stable social structures and settled cultural understandings. Tropology, in the sense of the study of the foundations of social and cultural understanding and action, is understood as a fieldworking social and/or cultural-historical science and not as a psychological or cognitive science mainly of laboratory orientation. But we have also to recognize that much effort has been expended in understanding the psychology, particularly the cognitive psychology, of the tropes—that is to say, the psycho cognitive foundations of their appearance and exercise. We turn to that fundamental interest here in the third and final section of this essay.

For present purposes we can argue that it was the associationist psychology of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that has been foundational for any psychologically oriented tropology. The interest in associative processes, both mental and social, continues to be fundamental in trope theory insofar as it seeks to relate tropes to the contexts in which they appear and with which they are associated, and to the associations they thus carry with them and enact forward in effecting the existing associations of things embraced in current cultural and social categories. The relationship between these processes and the interaction and impact of one upon the other, social associations on mental associations and vice versa, is what one seeks to keep in focus. Indeed, the very term *association* suggests that interaction. There is here, to be sure, something of the Durkheimian interest in the social determinants of knowledge and understanding and in "the elementary forms" as well (Durkheim 1927 [1915]; Fernandez 1973), with the caveat that these elementary forms are to be studied relative to cultural contexts and not with the presumption that they possess universal, metaphysical status. In trope theory the tropes are argued to be the "elementary forms" of cultural configuration and social interaction, although they are granted more causative force as schema or models in social organization than vice versa. In any event, tropes are understood as collective representations around which, in relation to which, and, especially, in discharge of whose implications much social life can be understood to occur.

It will be recalled that among the founders of Anglo-American anthropology both E. B. Tylor and J. G. Frazer, both under the influence of classical associationist psychology and both trying to plumb "the laws of thought" among "primitive peoples," made explanatory use of the principles of association an-

tecedent to Durkheim. Tylor was intensely interested in analogical processes that prevailed among "primitives" and felt that the key to their understanding lay in the "association of ideas." Many of these early associations, as Tylor argued, survived into the present, an instance of the "survivalist doctrine," which made contemporary ethnography also subject to inquiry into the analogical. Like Vico and like Tylor's contemporary Max Müller, Tylor noted the role of imaginative language, through the literalization of the metaphoric (what Müller called "the disease of language" and Tylor a "pragmatizing" process) in creating religious "realities" (Tylor 1958, chap. 8 and 9). Frazer quite besides organizing his massive multivolume comparative studies around a master trope, the "struggle for orderly succession and continuing social vitality" (the trope of revitalization as foundational to the social order), focused upon the mechanisms of sympathetic magic or "the laws of sympathy." This was an interest that inevitably evoked the two principles of association, by similarity (homeopathic or imitative magic) and by contiguity (contagious or contact magic) (Frazer 1911–15, vol. 1, chap. 3).

There was a tendency in these arguments to confine these laws of thought to the so-called "primitive peoples" and credit more rational, clearheadedly practical and logical procedures of thought than mere "accidents of association" to moderns and modern science. This was Frazer's scenario, although he recognized, like Tylor, that survivals of such associationism might be present in the modern untutored ("ignorant and dull-witted people everywhere"). It was Levy-Bruhl, who was also interested in the laws of association, or, as he preferred, "the laws of participation," who made the strong argument for pre-logicality among "primitives" (Levy-Bruhl 1926). His reading of a "mystical participation" into primitive life and his denial of its "practical rationality" came under unceasing attack, and his career is a story of a gradual yielding recognition of the presence and relevance of associationist thinking everywhere, and among "primitive" and modern alike. That is roughly the modern and postmodern position, and it is a recognition that trope theory accepts, as enabling, the understanding of why, according to their associations, certain tropes appear as apt commentary and apt figures of orientation in certain moments of ambiguous or difficult social interaction.

The founding father of American anthropology, Franz Boas, who early defended "the mind of primitive man" from such distancing and separatist doctrines as those of Levy-Bruhl (Boas 1965 [1913]), showed less interest in the associationist principles that interested Müller, Tylor, and Frazer. At the same time, he was alert to the presence and work of metaphor in rituals and folklore (Boas 1982 [1940]). This alertness was present as well in most of his students, and particularly in Sapir, Radin, and Benedict (Radin 1945), who are generally taken as the founding offspring of American cultural anthropology.

A collateral development to this older interest in the laws of association is found in Saussurian structural linguistics with its emphasis on the dual organization of language, that is, upon the interaction of syntax and paradigm or the syntagmatic and paradigmatic dimensions in human expression.[6] These two dimensions are readily linked with the two forms of association, by contiguity and by similarity, and in turn with the two basic tropes, metaphor, the paradigmatic trope based on similarity, and metonym, the syntagmatic trope based on contiguity. These relationships are worked out in a classic and influential late-1950s essay by Roman Jacobson in which he discusses two modes of style or thought, the paradigmatic or metaphoric and the syntagmatic or metonymic, and in which he identified these modes as pathologically present in brain-injured or aphasic persons on the one hand, but also preferentially present in personal or cultural styles on the other: the paradigmatic/similarity preferences of romanticism, for example, and the syntagmatic/contiguity preferences of classicism and realism![7]

Trope theory in anthropology absorbs this long-term interest in anthropology in cultural styles or cultural patterning in respect to problem solving, to aesthetic organization, and to practical activity and melds these with these later interests in the structures of association. The influential book by Pepper on metaphoric styles in philosophic argument, discussed above, also feeds into later work in trope theory, which has been concerned with cultural styles.

This interest in the structure of associations in mythology, cosmology, folklore, and ritual has been characteristic of the classic statements of structuralist analysis where syntagmatic and paradigmatic, metaphoric/ metonymic interactions and transformations have been in focus as part of the analysis.[8] And this structural interest has extended to the associative structures of everyday life (Barth 1976; Sahlins 1976).

The confluence in trope theory of antecedent interest in the laws of association on the one hand and later structuralist interests on the other is clear, although, as remarked, there is a primacy of ethnographic concentration in trope theory focusing on the content and play of the tropes, on their interaction, and on their relation to and fulfillment in the structures of specific social actions and specific cultural elaborations. An account of the experience of daily life, in this case the daily life of agro-pastoralists in Asturias Spain, as anchored in the play of tropes, endeavors to see the life of the average inhabitants as a passage from sunup to sundown and from rising to retiring through a structure, that is to say, a sequence of domains of experience each with its associated activities and practices, meanings and feelings, velocities and vocabularies. In this structuring of daily life it can be shown how, in a play of tropes, objects, activities, and events associated with one domain of experience can be employed to give form and meaning to objects, activities, and events characteristic of another

domain of experience. The analysis seeks through an integrated structure of domain and inter-domain associations to give a tropological account of the dynamic of experiential meaning in daily life.[9]

But there is a third important influence of the psychologically oriented in trope theory. This third influence has been the psychoanalytic study of meaningful associations as bound up in the representations, mainly images found in what is called, in psychoanalysis, primary processes. This refers mainly to dreaming but does not exclude other forms of relatively unconstrained imaginative representation and fantasy. Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* contains an original account of these associative processes as exemplified in dreaming: condensation, displacement, symbolization. His account of these processes is an important referent in trope theory insofar as the imaginative excursions taking place in dreaming and the narratives secondarily elaborated about them are prime exemplars of the working out of personal wishes and problems in other domains of being, belonging, and doing by metaphoric extension and metonymic explication.

The observation by the literary critic Lionel Trilling that "psychoanalysis is a science of tropes, of metaphors and its variants, synecdoche and metonymy" (Trilling 1953: 60), thus conforms to a view held for more than a decade in trope theory (see Colby, Fernandez, Kronenfeld 1981) of the relevance of psychoanalysis to our understanding of the meaning and dynamics of tropes, that is, to our understanding of the associative processes involved and their relation to problem solving. For the analyst, of course, that is mainly private and personal problem solving and not social problem solving. The latter is the main interest of trope theory.

As in the case with Levy-Bruhl, who began by confining those associative processes that are of interest to trope theory to the logic of primitive people and then was brought to recognize their presence in all thought, so analytic thought has moved away from considering tropes as exclusively characteristic of primary thought (Spiro 1982). The view now is that the dynamic of the tropes, which were of only incidental interest to Freud, is central to psychoanalytic understanding not only of unconscious primary processes but of all thought and its representation, primary and secondary, public and private, conscious as well as unconscious.[10] This ever presence of the tropes in all thought and action is and has been a basic axiom of trope theory.

It should be remarked that psychoanalysis like associationism and structuralism all aim at deciphering the thoughts and the argument that lie behind figurative argument, whether that argument be in the form of dreams and fantasies, myths and rituals, or other kinds of image laden narratives, and whether these thoughts be concerned with wish fulfillment, with the "unwelcome contradictions" of human life in society, or with distributive injustice

and domination and subordination. The point is to decipher the thoughts and the argument, the grammar (Foulkes 1978), that lies behind or beneath the images. We will return to this logocentric perspective below.

But it should be remarked that trope theory has been less interested in this "reductio ad cogitum" than in the interaction of the images themselves and in the way that this "play" or "argument of images" knits together or "cosmologizes" or at least suggests a coherent and overarching social and cultural order or worldview—that kind of coherence in culture akin to what Mauss called the "total social fact."[11] It has been the general feeling in trope theory, I believe, that we learn more about the particularities of culture from the analysis of the associations bound up in these images, the way that they, as kinds of nodal points in associative networks, are connected out into the complexities of experience in society and culture, than we do by searching for a parsimonious account of the underlying thoughts, or elementary forms, expressed in them. This may be simply to say that trope theory in anthropology, like anthropology itself, is fundamentally and foundationally ethnographic and only secondarily ethnologic.

Some of the most interesting work on the tropes, mainly on metaphor, is that which has been conducted by cognitive psychologists, particularly those at Berkeley under the aegis of Mark Johnson and George Lakoff. Though their efforts are "foundationalist," they have to be particularly interesting to any anthropologist, not in the sense that these cognitivists have engaged in ethnographic participant-observation in the hurly-burly and the "play of tropes" of everyday social life in culture, but because their cognitive philosophy is experiential. That is to say, it is anchored in the experience of the body in the world and in what the mind, itself so anchored, makes out of it.[12] It is very much a physical, however foundational and not a metaphysical, cognitive philosophy that is produced.

This is not the place to explore or explicate at length this quite interesting and astute foundationalism. As any cognitive science must be, the cognitivists are basically interested in the structure of intellection, that is, in concept formation;[13] but they do not see it as a matter of intellection alone but as a consequence of the mind generalizing from the body's quite physical experience in everyday life and translating that into the metaphors popular in everyday life. Metaphors and popular metaphoric expressions very much anchored in everyday experience provide for these cognitivists, and for the mind they endeavor to understand, the data by which concepts are formed. The mind moves therefore from a set of various "concrete metaphors"—Hitler is a Snake, Churchill is a Bulldog, Mussolini is a Rooster, etc.—to the "conceptual metaphor" "people are animals." Primary to the more abstract conceptual metaphor are the concrete metaphors in which corporeal feelings are involved and based

on actual experiences of these various animals and the fear and disgust or amusement or respect that they inspire. Thus is abstraction anchored in daily corporeal experience. The same argument can be made about ideation, as we see in everyday commentary upon the product or process of other's or one's own thinking. We say in popular parlance, for example, that someone's theory is "well constructed," or that her views "are solidly grounded," or that parts of the argument "needs support," or that his presentation "collapsed" under criticism, or that the "framework" of his argument seemed good but that he did not "build" to a convincing conclusion, etc., etc. These concrete metaphors are all instances of the conceptual metaphor "ideas in argument are buildings." This is, of course, the conceptual metaphor mainly at work—foundational, if we may be playful—in this essay.

We see how conceptual metaphors, the source of even mere abstracted concept formation generally, are built upon concrete metaphors. They are the primary instances of the mind's ability to convert the complexity of experience into abstractions. The concrete metaphors themselves derive from what the cognitivists call "image schema," which are the mind's imagistic formulations of its sensory experiences in the world. Experiences of light and dark, of up and down, of heavy and light, of rough and smooth, of cold and hot, of quiet and noise, etc. They are experiential inductions of the body through its senses and their "knowing" of the dark or bright, heavy or light, sweet or sour, rough or smooth—in short, their "knowing" of the blooming, buzzing, and ever-present physical world. Anthropologists, influenced by this cognitivist work and who seek through ethnographic participant-observation to live the experiential world of other cultures, thrusting themselves, one might say, into the round of local domains of being and becoming and into their "image schema," are obliged when in the presence of the concrete metaphors of other cultures to see what image schemes they evoke and to see whether the experiential foundations of the tropes in question are experienced in the same way in the culture studied as their equivalents might be in the culture from which he or she is derived. One would suppose if one accepts human universalism in respect to the sensory capacities, that although there would be great similarity in image schema the experiences cultivated in concrete metaphors would still be significantly different by reason of differing cultural contexts and differing domains of experience. Exploring this possibility would be, par excellence, an exploration of the tropical foundations of culture.

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Foundationalism, the search for the fundaments of behavior, is omnipresent in the human sciences as science. One says "as science" because it is always natural science's commitment to find and verify the most parsimonious pos-

sible explanation for that which it studies. Unelaborated fundaments it is supposed are the most parsimonious formulations to be made in the satisfaction of that commitment. The human sciences are widely influenced by its elder sister in this respect, and insofar as "tropology" is concerned we have reviewed several expressions, in cultural science and in psycho-science, of that commitment to the discovery "of the roots of tropological thought." When we put it in this way we realize how dependent we are on tropes themselves in formulating our inquiry. For the very notion of a foundation, of a deep underlying set of stable entities or entity upon which all thought or action (or both) is built is an instantiation of what Lakoff and Johnson would call the "ideas are building" image-schema—an application of the everyday experience in the popular mind of building things out of scratch to the intellectual task of theory building. So our inquiry is itself an instantiation of the problem we are examining and seeking to resolve. Tropology does not easily escape auto-poiesis (Maturana, H. and F. Varela, 1980).

For anthropology at least, we argue, the goal of discovering these fundaments of tropology can only have a partial interest because our primary commitment is not to the fundaments but to an ethnographic understanding of the social and cultural commitments of everyday life in which the fundaments, such as we may discover them and state them to be in tropological terms, are always at play. In this respect, tropology follows the great Roman rhetorician Quintillian in accepting the centrality he gives to the play of tropes and figures in the rhetoric of everyday life in culture. It is in this focus on the constant negotiation of these cultural commitments and on the interactional play of tropes, then, that we find our most perceptive and indeed most empirical understanding of the human condition.

Since it is the "play of tropes" and not "fundamentalisms" about them that interests us in anthropological ethnography and in tropology, we might well end on two well-known instances of that playfulness in respect to foundationalism. The eminent interpretivist Clifford Geertz, it will be recalled, cites the well-known (at least to philosophers) case of a woman hearing a myth about the world resting on the back of a turtle and being caused to wonder what the turtle was standing on. The interpretivist's (as also the philosopher's) anti-anti-foundationalist reply is, "Why madam, it's turtles all the way down." The equally eminent anthropological linguist and master of poetics, Edward Sapir, used to offer a playful critique of certain anthropological work that had come to his attention by saying of it (and employing the "ideas are buildings" trope) that "in this work the bricks don't reach the ground." He didn't mean, we take it, that in this particular instance of inquiry no fundaments—bricks, as it were—were discovered. He meant that the explanations offered, fundamental as they might sound, were not based or grounded on sufficiently rich or thick

field material. That was what was fundamental to anthropology as he understood it, and as this essay understands it as well!

Notes

1. This entitlement is an instance of the chiasmus in the relation between culture and rhetoric that the editors, Strecker and Tyler, point up in chapter 1 of this volume. I appreciate their clarification of the foundational nature of this rhetorical tendency toward the reciprocal in entitlements found among those interested in the rhetoric/culture relationship. This has certainly been my case. As an example, see J. W. Fernandez, "The Disease of Language and the Language of Disease," The Radcliffe Brown Lecture, *Proceedings of the British Academy,* 117 (2001): 355–399.
2. For an astute discussion of Vico's argument for the origins and foundations of sophisticated intellection as lying in the hurly-burly of popular thought seeking its form of understanding, see Michael Herzfeld (1987).
3. Steven C. Pepper, (1942) *World Hypotheses.* Others in anthropology have picked up this usage, as, for example, Victor Turner, who speaks similarly of "root paradigms" or "root metaphors" in the sense of "cultural models in the heads of main actors" that are influential in their action (1974: 42).
4. On the prejudice in sophisticated thought against mixed metaphors, see Pesmen (1991: 213–243).
5. For the theory of "meaning deficit" and "the general "inchoateness" of the human social situation as a stimulus to metaphoric predications, see J. W. Fernandez (1996: 21–40).
6. F. de Saussure, *Cours de Linguistique Generale* (1979 [1917]). By *syntagmatic* and *paradigmatic* dimensions one refers to the analysis of language structure in terms of a progressive and contiguous sequence of meaningful utterances (a syntax) on the surface dimension or plane of ongoing speech. This is the syntagmatic dimension. This dimension is accompanied at every instance of utterance by the possibility of choice and hence substitution of any among a set (a paradigm) of possible utterances associated by similarity. This is the second dimension and is thus a deep or hidden dimension of paradigmatic possibility. The first or surface dimension is also seen to be the dimension of contiguity, and the second or deep dimension the dimension of similarity. Since the play of tropes is fundamentally a play of contiguity and similarity relations, the Saussurian structural analysis has long been recognized as relevant to the analysis of the dynamic of the tropes.
7. Roman Jakobson, R. Jacobson and M. Halle, *Fundamentals of Language* (1956, part 2: 689–96). See also A. K. Ramanujan's discussion of the fundaments of South Indian styles of thought employing these distinctions (1989, vol. 23,1: 41–58).
8. C. Levi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth" and passim in *Structural Anthropology, The Savage Mind,* etc.
9. See the tropological structuration of the inter-associations of daily life offered in Fernandez (1990: 51–66).
10. M. E. Spiro, "Tropes, Defenses and Unconscious Mental Representations" (1993: 155–196). But compare Spiro (1980) where there is a tendency to limit metaphor and metonym to primary process.

11. Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*. See also David Foulkes's discussion of cosmologizing processes in the freely associating awake mind, the "dream of totality" as he calls it, which dream analysis gives us insight into (Foulkes 1978: 33–51).
12. The two important compilations of this experientialist cognitivist perspective are Mark Johnson's *The Body in the Mind* (1987), and George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's *Philosophy in the Flesh* (1999).
13. One should not confine these corporeal intellectual interests only to the academy. Subsequently George Lakoff has become very involved, from the left, in the political implications of the cognitivist "philosophy in the flesh" and has written several widely read books promoting what one might call a tropological politics. *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), and *Don't Think of an Elephant: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate; The Essential Guide for Progressives,* with a Foreword by Howard Dean (White River Junction: Chelsea Green, 2004).

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CHAPTER 11

Convictions: Embodied Rhetorics of Earnest Belief

Michael Herzfeld

I BEGIN THIS ESSAY WITH two polemical propositions. First, I oppose the strong separation of material and symbolic that appears to be the parochial inheritance of Cartesianism in social anthropology, and regard it as an intellectual proxy for relegating certain groups of people into past time or primitive status—Fabian's (1983) "allochronism." However much some of our colleagues seek to avoid the problem by waggling apostrophe-like fingers every time they use the taboo word "primitive," they do not avoid the problem by ironizing it or by seeming to bury it in a self-deprecating gesture: it is apparently as hard to swallow the idea of the materiality of the symbolic as it is to accept the artisanal character of intellectual work or to recognize the theoretical capacities of informants who lack a formal education. These parallels are not a matter of chance: in much anthropological discourse, the symbolic can serve as a proxy both for "them" (when it is vague and unfocused) and for "us" (when it is intellectual), much as "nature" is both the standard of acceptability (as in the process of naturalizing power) and an attribute of otherness (as in notions of primitivity). These treacherously slippery semantics have served hegemony well.[1]

Second, I see some of the same crass dualism lingering in currently fashionable protests against the centrality of ethnography in our work (ironically, at the very time when other disciplines are appropriating the method to their own, far less intimate and intensive engagements with social groups), and I regard the partial retreat to armchair anthropology (or perhaps today it might be

better described as "airplane seat anthropology") and the refusal of deep intimacy as a dangerous weakening of anthropology's commitment to the critique of overgeneralization about the human condition. Actually, I believe that we have moved past the danger point; there seems, at least among graduate students, to be a thirst to return to a field significantly enlarged by its engagement with postmodern critique to incorporate the modern, the urban, and even the virtual. But the fashion for sniffing contemptuously at those who still work in the peripheral spaces of world power sails dangerously close to reproducing old colonial attitudes in a discourse sweetened with the language of postmodern critique. Paul Rabinow (1986) signaled this danger at an early date, and his own subsequent and deep immersion in kinds of ethnography (e.g., 1999) that were made possible by these tectonic shifts also exemplifies what a sensitive approach can salvage from, as it were, the psycho-babel. George Marcus is another anthropologist who has often been charged with abandoning ethnography—or at least used as an excuse for doing so. Yet his own work has from the start remained resolutely grounded in ethnographic engagement (e.g., Marcus 1980, 1992, 1998), even though the unadventurous might decry the idiom in which he has chosen to attempt new approaches (e.g., Marcus 2005).

In this context, I would also like to signal at the outset my unease with the term *rhetoric culture,* which seems inadvertently—of that I am sure—to perpetuate the real-ideal distinction. None of those who have agreed to debate under this heading seem intentionally guilty of the kind of Cartesianism in question, yet the ultimate effect of separating off an area of cultural and social experience in the manner implied by the syntactical structure of the phrase would be to engender precisely the sort of objectivism that we ostensibly oppose. If the phrase is to serve a purpose, it must be as an exemplary object of critique, not as a banner that commits us to a homogenous goal. In our discussions in Mainz, I sensed a deep reluctance to contemplate seriously the implications of the expression's syntactic structure.

I would not oppose its retention if we could somehow guarantee that it remained as an intentional irritant. But I suspect that too easily some of those who wish the project well, and certainly all who oppose it, will accept the typological reification—the implication that there is a kind of culture that is not rhetorical. Perhaps the best we can do for the moment is to adapt the late Edwin Ardener's pointed question, "When is a rite not of passage?" by asking instead, "When is culture not rhetorical? Is it ever?" And at the same time we must resist the charge of an idealism unrelated to the experienced realities of everyday life, those tangible reminders of our mortal existence without which the whole enterprise is surely the closest thing we could imagine to a rhetoric devoid of material significance. In that sense, I identify strongly with Rabinow's engagement in *Writing Culture,* for I evince a similar tension between

the desire to participate in a project that is radically anti-Cartesian and at the same time fear its self-reification.[2]

My own preference is for the term *social poetics.* One could argue against this term, too, on the grounds that "poetics is always social." But such a stand presupposes an acceptance of what in fact, as I have pointed out again recently (Herzfeld 2005: 186-189), people are reluctant to accept: that the analysis of poetry is only one kind of poetics. If one insists on confining poetics to the literary and the aesthetic, its social character becomes that much harder to discern. While I would therefore agree that in some sense *social poetics* is either a tautologous or an oxymoronic term, depending on one's frame of reference, the very awkwardness of the term, its apparent paradoxicality, is precisely what recommends it. (I shall return below to the issue of paradox as a key aspect of the rhetorical construction of social reality.) If we can sustain a similar sense of awkwardness in the application of *rhetoric culture,* it might well prove useful; I am dubious only as to the extent to which the necessary discomfort can be maintained, given that the allure of easy reification has repeatedly proved hard to resist in the past.

Back to those gestural inverted commas, then, and their implications for my argument. The phenomenon of the "disclaimer" has an important role in social life, especially among those who are professionally engaged in various kinds of performance (see Bauman 1977: 21–22). Disclaimers are also a powerful tool of some less savory ideologies, as in such remarks—common in both Greek and Italian, for example—as "I am not a racist, but … " The central feature of disclaimers is that they instate what they claim to be denying; they translate irony into performativity. Politicians who deny the political character of their utterances are perhaps the most practiced performers of this kind of open deception, but we should be attentive to the appearance of similar phenomena in the theoretical elaboration of a discipline claiming to be emancipated from its racist and colonial roots. Disclaimers can be a clear sign of backsliding. But they are also claims—ironic claims, sometimes tactful claims, but claims nonetheless.

What neither disclaimers nor forthright enunciations of principle can do, however, is to establish the sincerity of motivations beyond any doubt. Indeed, they often provoke that doubt (and sometimes they are intended to do so). The title of this chapter, "Convictions: Embodied Rhetorics of Earnest Belief," plays on the double (duplicitous?) implications of its first word: a state of being either persuaded of something or of having persuaded others of one's own guilt. In neither case is belief really at issue; rather, the key point concerns legitimizing a characterization by appealing to public "knowledge."

Peter Loizos, in a very important footnote—characteristically understated and hidden away in what amounts to a rhetorical disclaimer of some ingenu-

ity in its own right—cites Rodney Needham's *Belief, Language, and Experience* (1972) to point out that, as in religion, so, too, in politics the issue of conviction defies certainty (Loizos 1975: 301, n.2). One cannot know what another person really believes, whether in religious or in political terms; one can only learn what a person claims to believe and calibrate it to that person's actions (which may themselves be calculated to deceive). But one can at least evaluate "performances" of sincerity, as Austin recognized in his category of "verdictives" (1975: 42–43, 154). This brings political conviction into the same framework as a judge's pronouncement of guilt, which constitutes the accused as henceforth (or until successful appeal) as socially guilty—which may in practice have nothing to do with who dunnit (and logically is completely independent of that circumstance). If the institutional framework of the court and the judge's own behavior mesh sufficiently well, meaning that there will be no appeal on a technicality, guilt is then established regardless of the actual history of the events to which it is attached.

In this way, the superficially double meaning of conviction—of being convinced and of being convicted—merges into a single notion: that a successful performance socially establishes factuality. Like excuses, for which Austin (1971) essentially argued that their relationship to events was secondary to their compatibility with existing social conventions and expectations, so, too, declarations of political conviction may actually look thoroughly insincere, yet succeed in galvanizing a following. This is a key issue for anthropology, which possesses (as I shall endeavor to show below) rich ethnographic materials for explaining what most modern anthropologists claim to find most baffling in their own societies: the success of clearly dishonest politicians in securing the adulation of the masses.

Let me cite one example immediately. The former Thai prime minister, Thaksin Shinawatr, was widely regarded even by his admirers as a cunning fixer rather than a man of unimpeachable honesty. This is part of the reason for which attacks on his probity failed to dent his ratings to any significant extent. As Rosalind Morris (2004) has shown, however, it is especially his apparently enthusiastic endorsement of the principle of "transparency" (*khwaamprongsai*) that for a long time won him support, because he has been able to use it, paradoxically, to obfuscate his favoritism toward kin and toward his own servants. His Italian counterpart, Silvio Berlusconi, was less adept at managing the notion of *trasparenza* in Italy. Thaksin's Cheshire cat act around the time of the 2006 elections—almost completely vanishing while the opposition cried foul and boycotted the elections altogether, then returning to chair cabinet meetings within two weeks of the predictable outcome—completely outshone Berlusconi's attempt to argue that strength in politics should earn him another term—an attempt that ultimately failed, exposing him to a greatly increased

risk of prosecution for corruption that only faded when he once again defeated his enemies at the polls.

In neither case can we say, or know, what moral or political convictions (other, presumably, than personal ambition and the desire to escape prosecution) animated these leaders' respective campaigns. What we can say is that their performance of political conviction and devotion to popular causes, as well as their sustained cultivation of anti-intellectualism, won them plaudits as men who modeled their political ingenuity in this public way. They achieved, so to speak, the exoneration of a public verdict that declared them virtually innocent of wrongdoing. (It may well be that it has become easier to make a case for the legitimacy of virtual judgments in the electronic age, especially given that both Thaksin and Berlusconi built their careers on the electronic media.) Theirs was, as it were, a highly transparent performance of a lack of transparency, in countries where the very idea of declaring one's full income honestly would look foolish rather than laudable. Purveyors of cheap dreams exemplified by their own rise to great wealth and influence, they both showed deep conviction in their devotion to the neoliberal ideal of an openly and freely competitive marketplace and to the importance, not of observing the rules, but of knowing how to make the rules work for them. Anthropologically, perhaps, their attitude made very good sense; it was long a staple of Mediterraneanist research by anthropologists, for example, to argue—on a sound empirical basis—that appearances were more important in matters of reputation than were literal accounts of what had actually happened (e.g., du Boulay 1974); and it also worked well with an increasingly strident anti-intellectualism that made attention to detail seem like a luxury that only the wealthy and the effete could afford.

Indeed, the ethnography of southern Europe has a great deal to teach us about the social values to which these skilled populists appealed. It would be a mistake to assume that ordinary people ever took the rhetoric of transparency and good governance (see also Orlandini 2003) at face value. One of the curious aspects of the anthropological study of morality is how long it took to realize a fundamental principle, paradoxical on the surface but eminently logical in terms of social practice: the stricter the code and its enforcement at the level of public performance, the easier it is for creative social actors to violate it, provided only that they first master its symbolic forms. At one level, this is simply a special case of the larger principle that moral and ideological prescriptions are empty signifiers, awaiting reinterpretation that, in the case of national and religious values, can actually reverse their practical effects to the point of turning peace into violence and equality into bigotry (Kapferer 1988; see also Zabusky 1995). It is also clearly the basis of most of the behavior we associate with bureaucrats, whose mastery of the rhetoric of rules and norms is a precondition for their ability to make special arrangements (Herzfeld 1992).

But for a long time, southern Europe specialists, while acknowledging local cynicism about the trustworthiness of one's neighbors, sought to frame the entire discourse in terms of moral "values" rather than in terms of rhetorical "practices" (see especially Peristiany 1965, 1976; Pitt-Rivers 1963, 1977).

Although the strategic manipulation of such rhetorics is foreshadowed in a few early ethnographies (notably Campbell 1964)[3], it seemed to disappear whenever anthropologists talked about the state. Anthropologists themselves talked about corruption as though it were an aberration rather than a social reworking—by functionaries as much as by other citizens—of a formal code that was simply unworkable in everyday life. While the case of Cretan animal-thieves' parliamentary patrons who energetically proposed antitheft laws they had no intention of implementing may be extreme (see Herzfeld 2005: 55), it illustrates the issue with peculiar clarity: if all parties to such arrangements understand what is at stake, what does it mean to talk about corruption and hypocrisy—unless it be further participation, by scholars, in the same seemingly duplicitous game of words?

Moreover, as I have argued in my work on bureaucracy (Herzfeld 1992), there is often a legitimizing model that facilitates such arrangements on internal moral grounds. This is the phenomenon I have called "secular theodicy." I derive it from Campbell's (1964: 327–329) astute remarks about the role of the doctrine of Original Sin as furnishing a template for the justification of petty wrongdoing in Sarakatsan society. We can extend that observation to Catholic as well as other Orthodox communities, particularly in those parts of the world—southern Italy being a good additional example—where "Christian" means "human being" and thus a flawed creature deserving of divine compassion rather than the impossibly saintly being the state would like to imagine as the punctilious taxpayer, observer of red traffic lights, and decorous citizen who never becomes a burden to the bureaucracy. (One might add that most bureaucrats, far from praising these ideal-typical citizens, particularly dislike them since they offer no purchase for special deals.) Truth-telling itself has a more ambivalent significance than a Protestant perspective might lead one to expect of a Christian people; du Boulay (1974: 82) reports a conventional Greek village claim that "God wants things covered up," and it is also clear from the writings of such early Orthodox theologians as St. John Chrysostom that lying in the defense of family interests is a peccadillo for which the dangerous social environment provides a ready-made basis for moral justification, always invoking the underlying template of Original Sin (Papadakis 1994). Clearly, in such a society, no one will expect the functionaries of the state to behave differently, and the supposedly divisive heritage of Ottoman rule is invoked to "explain" the disobedience of people who are—as indeed Greeks remain to this day—almost notoriously loyal to the ideals of national solidarity.

Christian doctrine recognizes the fundamentally flawed nature of ordinary people, explaining it away in terms of the temptation of Adam and Eve; the Greek state produces a secular version of this in blaming everything on the Ottoman heritage. But there are many other examples; in Italy, perhaps most notably, this logic extends to a state version of papal indulgences, themselves a convenient source of ecclesiastical income based on the logic of easily absolved petty sin. These are the so-called *condoni,* whereby at officially declared moments citizens pay off their accumulation of fines at a hugely reduced rate and in return receive final absolution for the petty crimes for which they earned those fines in the first place. The state, like the church, recognizes the weaknesses of its flock, and profits from them—as indeed it must do, since it is also staffed by creatures who are similarly imperfect both in their innate venality and in their poor management skills.

In such a context, it becomes pointless to talk about hypocrisy; conviction logically must be seen as a matter of performance rather than of innermost belief. This is not to say that people lack convictions, but these are private feelings that are readily acknowledged as impenetrable to others. In extending an argument I first articulated in a southern European, Christian context, I certainly do not wish to argue that Thailand, a predominantly Buddhist country, can be analyzed exactly in the same terms as Christian societies, although certainly the historical process of imitating Western models might well have introduced some related assumptions. But Buddhists, too, assume that ordinary people are far from perfect; they have not yet achieved full Enlightenment.

Doctrine thus also recognizes that repeated purification is a palliative that requires frequent iteration. In practice, merit-making activities, which can take the form of economically significant gifts or the provision of useful services to those in need, display some of that sense of moral audit that we find in the Catholic world—where, for example, the speed of transition through Purgatory can be increased in proportion to the repetition of certain prayers or the provision of funds to the ecclesiastical coffers. So the similarities, even if formal in nature rather than explicable in terms of historical patterns of derivation, provide a comparable background to the rise of a neoliberal ethic in both Italy and Thailand as well as in many other countries. It is no coincidence that former mobile phone manufacturers purveying a heady mixture of nationalism and populism rose to power in both countries—not, I would argue, despite, but because of their demonstrated skill at breaking the formal rules and then successfully defying those who wished to prosecute them for it.[4] Indeed, they exemplify, as few before them have done, the adage that "nothing succeeds like success."[5]

Such examples help to clarify other political puzzles of recent history—notably, for example, the question of why the discovery that Saddam Hussein had

not possessed weapons of mass destruction to any significant degree did not immediately subject the entire Bush administration to impeachable charges of deception. My argument here is that Bush or his handlers demonstrated considerable skill in showing the public *how* he used an untruth to project the greater truth of his political authority, and that he enhanced that authority through the impunity that he enjoyed in the aftermath of the revelations that he had apparently not told the truth in the first place. In this regard, he was not unlike the Lebanese sheikh, described by Gilsenan (1976), who told a deliberate lie in order to lure someone he suspected of more fundamental charlatanry into revealing his own mendacity. Such trickery apparently wins plaudits even when the goal is a great deal less laudable; moreover, in Bush's case, a timely adoption of the rhetoric of patriotism made challenges to his assertions much more difficult to launch.

One could thus argue, counter-intuitively (in the Gramscian sense that our intuition has already been colonized), that democracy incorporates the right to vote for those who have successfully cheated the polity as a whole. This illustrates the nature of social poetics in an extreme form: successful mastery over the conventions trumps the abstract ideals of transparency, honesty, and sincerity, because it shows that one is capable of operating the moral rhetoric of everyday life even at the highest level of political life.

For readers unfamiliar with my usage here, let me briefly offer an ethnographic example of what I mean by "social poetics." Here we return to my old friends, the Cretan sheep thieves. For them, it was important to steal in a slightly but palpably unusual way, in order for their thefts to have any social effect. An ordinary theft, in a society where such events are frequent, would have little or no social impact (regardless of the economic impact it might have on the victim). Since the goal of stealing is to prompt counter-raids ultimately leading to the mutual recognition of tough men and the creation of alliances between them, it is important to show, not just ability, but—especially—flair. Playing deliberately with the timing of a response, for example, is an excellent illustration: it converts linear time into a more interesting "rhythm" of events—what Bourdieu (1977:6–7) called "tempo." By playing with the conventions of social relationships, by (as it were) syncopating the rhythms of everyday interaction, skilled thieves constitute their own success; they master the rules, rather than letting the rules master them, and this equips them well for the larger political stage in which they create horizontal alliances with other tough shepherds while also building vertical connections with the more notable local politicians.

It seems not too far-fetched to draw a parallel between this systemic management of male selfhood with the cowboy swagger that appears to have become the predominant idiom of neoliberal politics. What Bush, Berlusconi, and Thaksin (on whom, see now McCargo 2005) all managed to do was a

version of the same tactic: what mattered was not that they had broken the rules, but that they had shown skill at doing so in the name of a higher or more inclusive morality, which they then deployed in an agile demonstration of that skill. They were, and are, adroit poets of their political selfhood.

They were also playing on what I would like to call the "social etymology" of moral evaluation. By this, I mean that they drew on culturally recognizable models of authority—the cowboy, the world-conquering king, the *mafioso.* These images, often unacknowledged in verbal discourse, nevertheless provide the very basis of legitimation. This illustrates the key point that exploring the social role of rhetoric must, as Vico long ago understood, take historical antecedents and their deployments into full account. If we are going to take rhetoric seriously in anthropological research, we must also recognize that rhetoricians have for millennia relied on the seemingly stable but pragmatically labile implications of etymological connections—here, again, reproducing a game commonly played in small, face-to-face communities.

■ ■ ■

Rhetorical studies exhibit a long-standing recognition of the profound significance of etymology for present-day practices (see Carruthers 1992; Stitt 1998: 12–20). Etymology is not merely a source of legitimation—on the obvious logic that if a signifier has been around for a long time, its current signified must have an equally long and therefore respectable history—but also, by logical extension, of subversion. In the latter respect, it was Giambattista Vico (1744) who particularly sought the weaknesses of claims to civic authority in the instability of meanings over time, arguing that meaning, like power, could be sustained only as long as its contingency was recognized and accommodated, and treating etymology as a useful tool to probe some of the more outrageous claims to eternal verity (see especially Said 1975).

Even when an ancient and a modern symbol look very similar, there may have been a high degree of semantic slippage between periods and social contexts. Moreover, etymology is not always obvious; indeed, its implications become significantly more amenable to manipulation when it is pushed into the background, or when the linkages proposed look rather tenuous (as they often do!). This realization comes to a head in Austin's (1975) recognition of the traces of past symbolism (what he aptly called "trailing clouds of etymology") in the way people make excuses. But I think we can also deploy a more general version of the same argument to understand how politicians appeal to authority even as they openly indulge in what, by their own professed standards, are straightforward lies. Their rhetoric is heavily laced with images that superficially appear to belie any doubts, but that may turn out to have very different implications when one looks closely at how they are used.

Even the fact of calling such rhetoric a performance is a serious challenge to its overt message of trustworthiness. Richard Handler (1986), building critically on novelist Lionel Trilling's discussion of sincerity and authenticity, suggests that the sincerity conventionally enjoined on Americans should be read in precisely such terms. It is not about truth-telling but represents the kind of performance that is expected. Both sincerity and authenticity are constructions, but, whereas sincerity is an attribution of intent, authenticity is all about some notion of bedrock genuineness.

It is also important to note that terms like authenticity and sincerity do not stand alone; on the contrary, they are significant elements in an ideological landscape that is itself subject to repeated rethinking and reworking. Even the rather obvious explanation that the focus on sincerity is a product of what Weber saw as a typically Protestant ethic, now exported to the world in the wake of colonialism (see Keane 1997, 2002) and embedded in what I have called the "global hierarchy of value" (Herzfeld 2004), is itself ideologically motivated. The emphasis on conviction, here to be read as a variant of sincerity, is "entextualized" (Silverstein and Urban 1996; Raheja 1996) in a master narrative about the evolution of democracy—imperfect in ancient Athens, with its debarment of women and slaves, but now exported worldwide by an all-knowing American administration. Professions of shock and outrage when these standards are too ostentatiously violated do not necessarily persuade any constituency that those who voice such moralistic sentiments necessarily follow them on their own account, but they provide a convenient yardstick by which the powerful can judge—convict—the weak. The discourse of human rights is perhaps the most dramatic illustration of all, especially in the hands of an administration that was virtually alone in opposing the creation of an international war crimes tribunal for reasons that are well understood (and, again for that reason, performatively effective).

It is worth noting here, moreover, that the concept of authenticity itself has an interesting etymology. *Authentēs,* the title of Christ, is a term denoting authority, one that later became retransmitted into Greek from Turkish as *afendiko* ("boss"; cf. Turkish *effendi,* "mister," "sir"). The term authenticity might thus be taken to imply a quality recognized because of the authority that claims it, rather than because it is in any sense intrinsic.

While Handler is undoubtedly right to see the West as having privileged sincerity over authenticity, it is also important to ask *why* sincerity came to predominate—why it became not just an abstract moral value but a marker of the world-dominant identity. This is a relatively recent development. For centuries, notions of authenticity were grounded in notions of personal authority, tied in turn to the very notion of property-owning that Handler (1985) sees as the starting-point of European and Eurocentric nationalistic reifications of

culture. The boss or lord held power by virtue of a historical fiat—the grant of land and title by a monarch. The local potentate's motives were irrelevant to that power; rather, its authenticity sprang from the bestowal of authority, an act that also carried with it the right to determine the true derivations (etymology) of its symbols and expressions. Given its source, only the foolhardy would have dared challenge these instruments of its legitimacy. But with the coming of a rhetoric of democracy, such "might is right" formulations no longer held a place in the imagination of the polity. Now power had to be seen as earned; like justice or the proverbial tree falling in the empty forest, it required both a context of performance and an audience.

Enter, then, the Protestant reformation. Up to that point, the Eastern Orthodox view, trenchantly expressed by St. John Chrysostom as early as the fourth century and apparently subsumed in the secular practices of the church of Rome, suggested that dissimulation was acceptable when used in defense of family interests. With what one might call the privatization of the conscience that occurred under Protestantism, however, the idea of transparency would come to seem ostensibly (or, at least, ideologically) more desirable; social units are replaced by monads, breaking apart the local social fabric in ways that perhaps foreshadow the usurpation of the social world of the local by the larger-scale possibilities afforded by a premise of a common culture—the process that made nationalism possible (see Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983: 37; Herzfeld 2005: 29).

By that token, too, the image of the transparent and sincere citizen-bureaucrat also came to conflict more directly with values increasingly marginalized as "traditional." A powerful residue of these earlier attitudes nevertheless subsisted in both the etymological link between *chrétien* and *crétin,* and the way in which in the modern language the ancient Greek term *agathos,* "good," a high virtue in the New Testament, becomes instead a term of condescension for simpletons, those who fail to be cunning (Greek *poniri,* Italian *furbi,* etc.). As a result, what works socially (as opposed to ideologically) to garner praise and trust today is not pure transparency, but the demonstrable ability to appear transparent while actually dissembling. Morris's excellent analysis of the Thai situation works at least as well in southern Europe, and certain parallels between the two regions—notably the relatively late arrival of the modernist-rationalist nation-state as the dominant structure articulating politics and culture—render the parallel especially tempting.[6]

But what is much less clear is what happened to older religious models of belief and conviction in the new politics of modernity. We tend to read those models through the prism of a modernity that, as Stewart (1989) reminds us, deliberately obfuscated the distinction between local and ecclesiastical values. They, like patron-client relations, are relegated to a despised zone of primitiv-

ism and traditionalism, forces against which modern citizens strive mightily even while attempting to retain their trappings as evidence of a past now cast aside (Collier 1997: 212). The modernizers in any society today must adopt the purist ("protestant") line.

But what of the remainder of the population—often, indeed, the majority? Representing them as having failed to acquiesce in this moral reordering infuses an international politics that would relegate certain nations to a peripheral role. We see these attitudes reflected in hegemonic sniffings about the supposed insincerity of Greeks, Italians, and Thais in general—a further and extended illustration of Stewart's hypothesis.[7] The idea of a radical break at the time of the Reformation and the linkage of ideals of sincerity with those of efficiency is also part of that myth-making process. Thus, the rise of ideals of sincerity can be read as an instrumental dimension of Western power-building, now extended to other nations whose leaders are anxious to embark on programs of neoliberal restructuring.

Greek villagers may in fact be better social scientists than Weber in rejecting the very idea of being able to assess sincerity. Such agnosticism, while social, helps us understand the accommodations that people make with both religious and political ideologies. A Roman butcher of my acquaintance declared that it was impossible to know whether God existed, and that he, a mere working man, could not achieve the level of discourse of those theologians and scientists who had debated the issue for two millennia. Interestingly for our present purposes, he went on immediately to point out that no politician ever really succeeded in convincing (*convincere*) people; rather, motivated forms of self-interest (*motivazioni*) would lead people to vote in ways that they would then justify retrospectively in terms of the political convictions it was then convenient to declare (see Herzfeld 2007). Like Needham (1972), these local informants, Greek and Italian alike, view claims of being able to interpret personal motivation with a great deal of skepticism.

These local commentators are admirably clear in their rejection of the possibility of "reading" psychological inner states. Consistently with this position, they also take the view that religion is not primarily about *understanding* the cosmos. For them, it is instead about accepting shared conventions that permit some degree of social consensus in an otherwise deeply fractured local society—a classic instantiation of the segmentary principle that even the most violent forms of fission and fusion presuppose a conceptual unity of identity. Thus, they sometimes explain their apparent devotion to the rites of Orthodoxy by citing the line, *Pisteve ke min erevna*—"Believe and do not inquire"—in other words, do not upset the status quo. It is also clearly significant that they quote this ostensibly Christian injunction in defense of concepts that the church itself rejects as "superstition" (*dhesidhaimonies;* see Stewart 1989, 1991).

That, more than anything else, shows that they understand this injunction as social rather than as theological, and as enjoining a conventional stance of acquiescence rather than a disciplined inner belief. It is an argument, moreover, that goes considerably further than Chrysostom's argument, which merely recognized the imperatives of family loyalty as important to the church's mission of moral control and thus sanctioned lying in defense of close kin; Chrysostom certainly did not deny the possibility of belief as such, and indeed to do so would have been incompatible with his theology. Most people are not theologians. Content to accept the definition of Christian identity as membership in a community of sinners, they do not want to argue against an injunction that in practice protects their own ability to operate behind a mask of strict morality and secrecy. Thus, the expectation of blind obedience is, again, not interpreted as an injunction to be taken literally, but as a stage direction, so to speak, for the performance of social life.

Crucial here is the term *pisti*[*s*], one of those culturally embedded technicalities that Needham correctly saw as undergirding the modern English word *belief* (which is how it is usually translated). Needham makes a forceful case against assuming an identity of meaning between the ancient Greek and modern English words. The evidence to be found in the modern Greek countryside, moreover, handsomely endorses his caution. He suggests that the ancient root of this word has been influential, via the New Testament, in shaping English-language notions of religious devotion. That is certainly possible; but, as in his own argument, this means that using the term to translate a Nuer or Bororo concept is a distorting mirror because these etymological associations are profoundly European. We can make the same argument about discontinuities or radical changes separating the New Testament meanings from their modern cognates.

It is important to recognize that New Testament and even older terms may in any case have acquired radically different meanings from those found in the ancient texts—and certainly, as is also the case with *anthropos,* from those attributed to antiquity by Enlightenment and Romantic Western European commentators as well. Indeed, if modern Greek usage is to be a useful guide to understanding the distortions that have affected ancient Greek terminology on its long path from classical antiquity via the New Testament and Byzantine theology and so on to West European Christianity in its several refractions, it is as a source of thoroughly subversive comparisons that might even suggest, in some cases, a reversal of what I have suggested here: that, by considering the ancient terms in light of their modern derivatives, we might be able to slough off some of the distortion introduced into our understanding of the ancient terms by those Enlightenment and Victorian prejudices that played so instrumental a role in creating the moral universe of colonialism.

Many readers of Needham's book were less than enthusiastic, I suspect, about following his extraordinarily learned excursus into etymology all the way from antiquity to the present. How much more arduous, then, it would be to ask a reader to consider modern Greek meanings as well, especially as the current global hierarchy has assigned a very minor and derivative status to modern Greece itself. But that is precisely the challenge that the ethnography of modern Greece sets both the discipline of anthropology and the critique of Western hegemony more generally. Again, it may be argued that etymology is irrelevant because most people do not spend much time considering the derivations of words (although, under the influence of a powerful classicizing cultural politics, that is less true for Greece itself than it is for many other countries).

Etymology, however, is the key to understanding how words can often seem to drag into the present a set of associations, never made explicit, that possess a long history and often originated with significantly different usages. This perspective, again, is one that Greeks understand well—their entire recent history has been taken up with cultural wars over questions of what Wace and Thomson (1913) called "political philology." For this reason, but also given the prevalence of skepticism as I have just described it throughout the Greek-speaking world, it is surely no coincidence that an anthropologist working in that environment—Peter Loizos—conceived the insight into the parallel between religion and politics with which I began this chapter. This is not just a matter of treating the nation as tantamount to an object of worship, important though that insight is (e.g., Kapferer 1988). The issue here is, rather, that of redefining the notion of religion—not, perhaps, moving it away from Christian models to the degree that Asad (1993) rightly recommends, but at least decentering the ecclesiasical emphasis that has predominated.

The effects of such a move are as radical for our understanding of politics as for the reanalysis of religion in the old, narrow sense. If Greeks accept the morality of lying to protect one's own (and even simply as a form of discipline, grounded in dissimulation of the self), and if for them such matters are more about human relations and affect (note Needham's [1972] discussion of the etymological link between German *lieben,* "love," and English *belief*) than psychological inner states, this, clearly, is going to be a more persuasive model for understanding political activity than any suggestion of psychological transparency.

Rendering the question of belief irrelevant, or at least secondary, also whisks the carpet from under the feet of self-appointed moral judges of other people's cultures. It undermines the sense that religion must somehow be about a universal canon of truth and sincerity. It is thus consistent with an anthropology that rejects judgmental accounts of "corruption" and the like in favor

of nuanced ethnographic accounts of the power dynamics that such practices entail. The discipline has not arrived at this position with ease. On the contrary, throughout the early Mediterraneanist literature, one senses an ethical struggle of considerable strain. On the one hand, a fundamentally Protestant ethic proclaimed the virtues of sincerity and expressed some surprise that in these ancient lands dissembling appeared to be not only the prevalent pattern but actually a moral imperative. On the other hand, the anthropological commitment to cultural relativism meant that the interaction between clientilist politics and local values could be explored more or less on its own terms. Here again Campbell's (1964) account of the interrelationship between local values and the dominant practices of the political establishment stands out, both for its detailed ethnographic exploration of this nexus and for Campbell's refusal to sound the kind of moralistic condemnation that mars the religiously inspired work of the missionary E. C. Banfield (1956). As du Boulay and Williams (1987) were later to demonstrate, such views made little sense in terms of Orthodox cosmology, let alone in those of village values.[8] Gullibility is not a social virtue; the ancient Greek term *agathos,* "good" or "noble," has come in modern Greek to have the ironic significance of being simple-minded, and it is not irrelevant—for those who might doubt the antiquity of such equivalences—that *crétin* and *chrétien* ("Christian") are also cognates.

The same morality that has elevated sincerity to an importance that belies its social irrelevance has also, with the philosophical support of Cartesian attitudes, removed the human body from the realm of politics. Our own intellectual tradition makes a Cartesian distinction between gesture with an intentional semantics ("giving signs," in Goffman's [1959] terminology) and unconscious body movement ("giving *off* signs"). There may also be an underlying assumption, also of Protestant inspiration, that, because bodily movement is "unclothed" (Keane 1997), it reveals more of the true innermost convictions of the social actor. But this, too, is an assumption that says more about Western European prejudices than it does about local perceptions and practices. A politician's bodily stance may appear insincere, but to many people the more important question is whether it looks appropriate to that person's role and to the particular issue being addressed.

Embodiment and posture are subject to the same inscrutability as professions of faith. The village girl who glides through side streets with her eyes demurely averted is performing a persona that may, or may not, correspond to her actual actions; she may be earning a degree of freedom from observation that one less adept at performing her moral virtue would not be accorded. The dramatic bodily posture of the political rhetorician conveys messages with which it is much harder to argue than are verbal professions of honesty and integrity.

Moreover, such performances also depend on etymological implications; mannerisms have histories. Greek village gestures may be directly related to those found in representations of New and Old Testament scenes on church walls, although it is perhaps unclear which came first, the local gestural pattern or the religious models. The village woman keening for her dead is usually quite explicit about invoking images of the lamenting Virgin Mary (see Alexiou 1974: 77). (Attempts to connect shepherds' postures to antiquity [Lawson 1910] have been less successful for Greece than they have for Italian localities such as Naples [see Kendon 2000], but their very existence speaks to an awareness that time-depth, especially one connected with the official state historiography, confers authority.) My Roman butcher friend offered a detailed account of how the so-called *tulipano* ("tulip") gesture of cupped hands waving up and down, usually employed to express exasperation, was a *gesto papalino,* a papal gesture. This may be the equivalent of a folk etymology (and contrary to scholarly prejudice; see Ardener 1971: 224, and also Carruthers 1992), but, in a city that attributes to the harshness of the long centuries of papal rule its famous willingness to accommodate to the realities of power, it also suggests some of the sense with which Romans more or less unconsciously invest in it.

To take another example from the peripheries of the colonial world, Thai bureaucrats' combination of a formal and rather reluctant politeness (bad cop) with the jovial manners of a more familiar mode (good cop) also have histories outside religious sources; they speak to both the *sakdina* system of feudal relations and to the imported Western bureaucracy, with its authoritarian early forms before the rhetoric of democracy began to take over. There is also more than a suggestion of the twin aspects of the royal demeanor, in which hectoring power can be accompanied by the distribution of charity. At another level, someone remarked to me that the eventually successful young candidate for the governorship of Bangkok in 2004 resembled, in his poise and calm, the royal ideal, whereas his authoritarian predecessor had embodied the more violent dimension of that august model. Mutliple and mutually entwined etymologies of gestural form and manner play an important if indeterminate part in the ongoing political reshaping of Thai society.

Because these embodied aspects are usually only in the background of the actors' awareness, I suggest, they are particularly effective as rhetorical devices. It is precisely this inaccessibility to analysis that renders them relatively durable; anthropologists' own reluctance to engage such inchoate data (but see Ardener 1971: xliv, for a rare early example) is itself an important piece of evidence attesting to their effectiveness. Here, moreover, we see with particular clarity how irrelevant attributions of belief must be, for these performances carry conviction in ways that do not necessarily tell us anything about what the particular politicians are thinking at the time. What they rely on instead is a ste-

reotypical disclaimer. "You shouldn't trust what Thais tell you," its utterer seems to be saying, "but *I* will tell you the truth. I'm not like other Thais!" Its impact is analogous, rather than identical, to that of the Greek who, in a converse performative mode (that is, one that emphasizes sincerity instead of insincerity), insists that he "does not wish to praise himself" (*okhi pos thelo na peneso ton eafto mou*), will "not speak at length" (*na mi poliloyiso*), or tell lies (*kaka ta psemata,* "lies are bad"), knowing full well that such declarations are only taken literally by foreigners and imbeciles. He will assure his foreign interlocutor that he is sincere "because" that's the way Greeks are. But in the same breath he will go on to tell you that, alas! today, you can trust no one, so that he remains a rare instance of the true Greek spirit of dependability and forthrightness. He does not expect you to believe him, any more than a man who derides all women as immoral but bridles at any such suggestions made specifically about his mother or sister actually expects others to believe his exceptionalist claims—he knows, for one thing, that his interlocutors use exactly the same device.

Thus it is that when a Cretan politician introduces laws into the national parliament against animal theft, it is the animal thieves who are least worried. They know full well that his pronouncement is an intentional distraction, and that he is one of those who will most actively protect them from prosecution by suborning witnesses and spreading inchoate threats of retribution against witnesses and untold wealth for those who cooperate. When another politician announces in preelection campaign leaflets that "he does not want any animal thief to vote for him," he understands this statement as an ironic locution—as, in fact, an invitation to vote for him since he has demonstrated such poetic flair in taking over the parliamentary discourse of retribution. By voting for him, they not only keep their part of a bargain grounded in local values, as Campbell demonstrated for the Sarakatsani, but they also demonstrate the mutual understanding on which these superficially defiant declarations are based. Behind the mask of Protestant sincerity, I suggest, Bush has recognized and captured the same pragmatic stance on the part of American voters—people who would be appalled, at least rhetorically, at the idea that they had voted *because* their candidate had not only lied but had also managed to get away with it. Given the evidence that Bush has adjusted his position on a number of issues for which the religious right found him too liberal, it may not be fanciful to suppose that the protestantization of American political discourse has enhanced the standing of those who can successfully perform a sincerity their actions belie, or that Bush and his handlers have understood how they can use this sociological paradox to great advantage.

Strategies of self-performance play with assumptions about intentionality. Obviously, intentions are opaque, and, as we have seen, Greek villagers are among the first to recognize that fact; but it never prevents villagers from try-

ing to guess what is going on in their rivals' minds. That seems to take up a very large part of gossip, in fact, and the strategic nature of accusations of sorcery (e.g., Argyrou 1993) demonstrates that plausibility rather than belief is what is at stake. Argyrou's analysis, for example, avoids the entire question of whether his informants really believed the stories about sorcery and the evil eye. Rather, he focuses on the construction of such stories as a way of creating a moral alibi for a young bride's failure to have children—a serious sign of weakness in the Greek Cypriot community he describes. As with excuses of more trivial kinds, so too the victims' co-villagers are unlikely to challenge these accounts, if only because they may need to be able to deploy similar conventions in the future. In this situation, attributions of belief can never be more than rhetorical. But as rhetoric—as performance—they do have substantive material consequences. No one actually claims to be able to read minds. But the guessing game also builds up innuendo and corrodes reputation. Brutus, after all, is an honorable man.

To understand such interactions without making judgmental claims about sincerity and its absence, it is necessary to address two basic issues. First, there are local self-stereotypes against which such performances must be judged; and second, these stereotypes increasingly mark a relationship between local culture on the one hand and a generalized set of assumptions about universal values—actually values of largely Western origin, constituting the global hierarchy mentioned above—on the other.

The first point should be obvious to any anthropologist. Clearly, to talk about sincerity without knowing how it is locally evaluated makes little sense; the Greek preference for cunning intelligence (*poniria*) over innocence, for example, means that remarks about the latter are not the compliment they might be in some English-speaking contexts. Failure to recognize this is also a failure to recognize the importance of irony in social relations (see Fernandez and Huber, eds., 2001), and leads to an excessively literal interpretation of events. From that perspective to ethnocentric judgmentalism is not a long path.[9]

Irony is an especially important dimension of social life precisely because, like gesture, it is so evanescent. Anthropologists who ask precisely what an ironic remark meant often experience the sense of being pushed back out of a secret room as informants are suddenly reminded that there are things outsiders should perhaps not know. There is a classic circularity in such situations, since the withholding of insight condemns the anthropologist to continue appearing an outsider. And that impression may be reinforced by condescending remarks about how difficult it is to understand local idiom (see, e.g., du Boulay 1974: 48) and by self-deprecating generalizations about the insincerity of local people—a disclaimer that is actually yet another use of irony to bar the way to inquisitive outsiders.

Things are thus rarely what they seem to be. In Rome, it was often made clear to me that really oleaginous manners probably meant the menace of an underworld presence. One artisan, for example, insisted that the elaborate politeness of a woman who came to inquire about his wares actually constituted a thinly veiled threat: you are welcome to our protection and custom, but, once you accept it (and all the material advantages it conveys), you will be ours, and we will deal with the slightest hint of desertion with all the severity that this sweet politeness masks. In another instance, a loan shark forced a defaulting client to live in his house on the pretext of "looking after him"—a euphemism of sinister implications. It was reinforced by the assurance that the victim's younger daughter could work in a bar under the loan shark's patronage without fear of molestation, this, again, being a serious threat all the more effective for being left implicit (Herzfeld 2009: 162–164).

These nuances form a space of resistance to the domination of supposedly universalistic values, of which the anthropologist is all too easily mistaken for a bearer. We therefore cannot examine the play of performance and disclaimers without getting caught up in the dialectics of Western identity. The use of ironic politeness has a long history in many parts of the world. But today it is often framed in contrast to a notion of sincerity that, while not necessarily Western in origin, nevertheless seems calibrated to expectations that powerful outsiders will cast their judgments in these terms. The *mafioso* who abjures immediate violence in favor of sinister courtesy is not necessarily thinking of such universalizing models. But Italians and Thais who criticize their respective nations for a lack of sincerity are at least implicitly calibrating their remarks to a putative international standard—even though, in fact, they may (and often are) doing so ironically.

Sincerity is thus, paradoxically, about performance. In this, it shares the sense of internal paradox that we find in such formulations as "strategic essentialism" (Spivak 1989) or the public performance of secrecy (Herzfeld 1985: 207–209). In terms of statecraft, the same kind of paradox lies at the heart of what I call "cultural intimacy": the state cannot dispense with the very features of its national culture that it most ardently disowns on the public stage, because it is these, rather than the abstractions of nationalist ideology, that sustain citizens' loyalty and willingness to defend the nation to the bitter end. The paradox of rhetorical sincerity is thus a reflection and reproduction of the underlying paradoxes through which citizens understand the state itself.

That stance of sincerity is especially conveyed in gesture and movement. In the production of bodily posture, for example, Western politicians try to convey "earnestness." But note that "earnestness," again, indexes a manner of self-presentation rather than a psychological orientation; it is a public perfor-

mance, one designed to lend conviction, of an attitude that may itself be entirely false. "Getting away with it" gains more respect, at times, than "meaning what you say": such is the skill that marks true cultural intimacy—that disreputable knowledge that binds politician and citizen in an ineluctable complicity against the formal rules of national decorum. What is judged, then, is not the intent but the performance itself. And it is judged by criteria that reflect a post-Protestant vision of the world, in which, whether or not a politician is sincere, the effective performance of that sincerity is crucial to getting votes or other forms of support.[10]

The Western "democratic model" parades an assumption that politicians and voters alike will be sincere. Paradoxically, again, their sincerity depends on the secrecy of the ballot; violations of that principle are treated as "dishonest." While Western observers may be shocked by the ease with which Greek villagers gather information about each other's voting habits and intentions (see Herzfeld 1985; Loizos 1975), the secret ballot is strangely allied with ideals of transparency, showing up the fundamentally social character of both. It, too, is a performance of secrecy.

We now come full circle to Loizos's observation about the impossibility of knowing what people's political convictions really are. We can often know what their *interests* are, and we can usually tell to what extent their actions have served those interests. But we still do not really know if that was the actual goal; our suspicions are guesswork, grounded (to be sure) in social and personal knowledge. It is not coincidental that degrees of social distance are considered, in a range of societies from the Nuer (Evans-Pritchard 1940) to the European societies I have described here, to correspond to degrees of knowledge. And yet the ultimate agnosticism of the Greek phrase "How can I know another person?" suggests that knowing others is always a matter of context and is never certain.

Does this mean that rhetoric is necessarily always insincere or duplicitous? Is there a kind of culture ("rhetoric culture") that displays this feature more than others? Or is it the case, as I argue here, that all culture is necessarily rhetorical, in that it is about engaging others in the social construction of mutual knowledge and understanding? And in that case, is there really any virtue in creating a terminology—*rhetoric culture*—that a Cartesian could too easily take to mean that there were forms of culture that were *not* rhetorical? Does its claim to anti-Cartesian logic perhaps perpetuate Cartesian assumptions?

This stream of nagging questions prompts a moment of reflection on the rhetoric of the present essay as well: why, instead of offering a set of conclusions as convention demands, do I end this brief and synthetic chapter with a set of questions?

Well, why not?

Notes

1. This essay represents something of a recapitulation of themes to be found elsewhere in my work (see especially Herzfeld 2005). I am grateful for the opportunity to explore them from a new angle here, that is, in the context of the Rhetoric Culture project; while I have my reservations about the intellectual trajectory so delineated, and indeed express those concerns here, the framing of the debate in these open-ended terms is a precious opportunity for some productive new reflections.
2. Even Rabinow's cautions did not anticipate one of the most important critiques of that enterprise, which took issue with its predominantly male authorship not as a problem in itself but as symptomatic of a besetting reluctance to engage with the *political* implications of what was being attempted despite the key phrase in the book's subtitle, "the poetics and politics of ethnography" (Mascia-Lees, Cohen, and Sharpe 1987–88). I take it that we have moved on to some extent, although there is still a preponderance of male writers here (myself included!), but I also worry about the conjunction *and*—is not poetics by definition *always* political inasmuch as it is concerned with social action?
3. I would argue that Campbell, in a characteristically unassuming way, rescued one of the least-acknowledged strengths of Evans-Pritchard's (1940) work with the Nuer, which was, specifically, his recognition that even such apparently factual attributes as kin relations were subject to creative management in the pursuit of very specific interests. That realization partially disappeared from Africanist research until it was rediscovered by some of the more creative successors to the Manchester School and later applied also to the morality of state discourse (see especially Moore, ed., 1993).
4. They faced the same threat of a ten-year debarment from politics in the event of legal conviction; both succeeded in evading any such development; and both then returned to real political success—Berlusconi as the head of the longest-lived post–World War II Italian government to date, despite the fact that his coalition combined extreme nationalists with a Northern separatist party, Thaksin as an astute game-player who drew on the support his populist policies gained him in the most depressed part of the country.
5. They might well have understood this quite consciously, given the phenomenal success as public intellectuals of economists whose predictions have, in the literal sense, completely failed. Like diviners whose auguries went awry but who survived with their power enhanced by the simple fact of that survival (see Evans-Pritchard 1937 for an early ethnographic example!) —these economists demonstrated that, like conviction, success was a matter of performance rather than of objective judgment.
6. Indeed, it is not outlandish to seek religious models in political discourse. Much modern theorizing about religion actually works better for politics, from Durkheim's sociocentric model of religion (perfect for nationalist projects, as the Turkish constitutionalist Ziya Gökalp—a committed Durkheimian—knew very well) to Lévi-Strauss's (1964: 24) vision of myth as a machine for the suppression of time (also perfect for nationalistic historiography). Even before the return of fundamentalist discourse in Western political policy, that connection was always more or less clear. Again, Kapferer (1988) is very helpful on this point; see also Herzfeld 1985, 1992.
7. An interesting point of contrast, however, lies in the dynamics of self-stereotyping. Greeks often revel in a diamond-in-the-rough image that includes notions of sincer-

ity, interpreted by unsympathic outsiders as rudeness and aggression, whereas in both Italy and Thailand there is a style of collective self-accusation on the grounds of insincerity. While there is no space to explore this contrast here, I suspect that it is closely connected to the very different dynamics of irony in Greece as compared with the other two countries. Within Italy, moreover, Romans hold a self-view that in this regard, and in contrast to that of other Italians, more closely approximates to the Greek image; the strategic internalization of outsiders' contempt clearly plays a role in both.

8. One can arguably detect a bias not unlike Banfield's in Samuel Huntington's (Huntington 1996) treatment of the Orthodox—and especially Balkan—world. But there is in fact a long tradition of such stereotyping in those parts of the anthropological canon that were particularly inspired by the perceived needs of the Western camp during the most intense periods of the Cold War (see Fabian 1983: 48).
9. This point also underscores the central importance of linguistic mastery. Anthropologists who speak the local language poorly and do not trouble to assess its relationship with learned and media discourse, for example, cannot expect to pick up the complex nuances that constitute the intimate interior of social interaction—the very stuff of which cultural intimacy is made. This is all the more true because most bureaucratic nation-states invest a great deal of effort in disguising that interior knowledge, for reasons that are both ideological (the defense of national honor) and practical (one can see why the politicians who shield sheep-thieves might be particularly sensitive to foreign perceptions of their agile duplicity).
10. If readers remark that the term "post-Protestant" is inappropriate in the case of southern European states, and still more in that of predominantly non-Christian ones, I would argue that Weber's model of Protestantism is applicable far beyond Christianity. It is also significant that one of the criticisms made of the Cartesian leanings of the official state church of Greece is that it shows "Protestant" tendencies (e.g., Giannaras 1972).

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CHAPTER 12

An Epistemological Query

Pierre Maranda

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

> There is … a cline of kinds and modes of rhetoric that traverse realities ranging from concrete speech events through text analysis to virtual worlds.
>
> I. Strecker and S. Tyler

This short note touches on three topics that seem to me fundamental to Rhetoric Culture theory with respect to the "cline of kinds and modes of rhetoric." The first topic concerns the minimal audience of a speech; the second, the minimal speech or rhetorical utterance; and the third, the use of rhetoric by nonhuman animals.

What is the minimal audience of a speech? Oneself? Are inner speech, and voiced talk to oneself, instances of rhetoric? Take Baudelaire's first line of his famous poem:

> Sois sage, ô ma douleur, et tiens-toi plus tranquille.
> Tu réclamais le soir, il descend, le voici.
> (Be good, my pain, and remain more quiet
> You were calling for evening, it descends, here it is).

When addressing oneself in the absence of any interlocutor, one may use all sorts of rhetorical *modus loquendi:* exhortation, reprimand, admonishment, self-praise, self-pity, compassion, etc.

"What a fool I am making of myself!" or "Wow! Great! I did it at last!"

The speaker and the hearer of such utterances—the orator and the audience—are one and the same person.

And how should we categorize as audience the pet its master addresses in a variety of different terms, from very affectionate to severe, stern scolding? Or the sweet, encouraging words, one directs to one's house or garden plants?

And what of people talking (most often in harsh short sentences) to their vacuum cleaners, to their computers, and other appliances? Of course, machines—contrary to living organisms—are deaf, inert audiences that there is no point in trying to convince. Such buzzwords then function as a *défoulement* resource in which the addressee acts, actually, as a sounding board on which utterances bounce back on the speaker himself.

There is thus a full scale of hearers, from the most responding ones (humans) to the most indifferent ones (machines). Does Rhetoric Culture theory include the whole range of such audiences?

■ ■ ■

Should we consider as rhetorical statements like "Hey you there!" or "Don't touch that!" or "Stop crying!" and such other exclamations or commands? And how about a glacial look, or the giving of the finger, or slapping someone on the face?

See the definition of rhetoric given in the Oxford English Dictionary (emphasis added): "The art of using language so as to persuade or influence others. … (a) The expressive action of the body in speaking, (b) the *persuasiveness of looks or acts.*" What stand or approach does Rhetoric Culture theory take with respect to such minimal speech acts?

■ ■ ■

People talk to their pets. But pets can also take the initiative in rhetorical admonitions, as in the case I shall describe briefly below. But first, I wish to submit a few general thoughts on the use of rhetoric by nonhuman animals. Do such considerations question some epistemological foundation of Rhetoric Culture theory?

I phrase my point in terms of the non-tropologicalical uses of nonhuman "languages," languages, nonverbal or vocal, used by several animal species, both mammals and nonmammals, to persuade or influence other animals both of the same species and of other species when, for example, competing for niches. And also for communicating with humans.

Everyone is familiar with the way that animals—cats or dogs or bears, to mention only a few species—delimit the perimeters of their territories, for instance with urine. Many species code their statements in an olfactory language, a code that they are expert in handling. They thus influence the behavior of competitors, stating rights that they will defend if needed by other statements such as hissing, barking, fighting, etc.

Male birds of paradise use "multimedia" techniques in their courting songs and dances in order to compete in attracting females. Having "dressed up" in their best plumage, they trim the branches of trees, removing leaves that obstruct sunshine to keep their bright colors in the best light. They are then ready to utter their theatrical discourses consisting of display calls while jumping from branch to branch and opening and closing their wings to alternately show and hide their shining chests. Females will then inspect each male closely, especially their wing pits, and opt for one male that they regard as preferable to the others.

Are such communication strategies instances of rhetorical discourse? Each male's performance aims indeed at influencing the choice of the females, at persuading them to select him. Is that very different from men cruising women in bars or other contexts?

No need to call here on the very large literature on the language of apes and monkeys, nor on the language, very elaborate, of dolphins (with their triple resonance system of emissions). I shall make my point with the single example of a cat, knowing that it will evoke "resonance" in readers who have house pets.

My son and his girlfriend have had a cat for some years. They all get along well, having established a stable relationship. The cat is well behaved, has regular, predictable, habits, and conforms to the routines conveniently defined by his masters. Usually, when going away for a relatively long period of time, they either leave the cat with a friend who takes care of it, or else they have someone move in and live in their apartment during their absence. Upon their return the cat greets them happily, rubbing itself against their legs, jumping in their lap, purring, and giving other signs of satisfaction to see them again.

Once, however, they had to leave for several days without being able to find a cat-sitter. They left plenty of food for their cat, with an adequate supply of water, some toys, etc. When they returned to their apartment, the cat first gave a display of complete indifference and walked away in another room. My son and his girlfriend took stock of this first message and thought he would come back to them as usual after a bout of sulkiness. The girl went to the bedroom to make a fresh bed. She had barely completed the operation when the cat showed up and jumped on the bed. Sitting in the middle of the clean sheets and locking eyes with her, he defecated profusely—a statement contrasting strongly with his regular use of his litter box.

Then, apparently pleased with himself, he jumped down from the bed and walked slowly away. The cat had made his point, which can be glossed as: "You neglected me when you went away, so 'You made me shit!'"

Isn't that rhetoric? It is surely a nonverbal communication act that carries a message of discontent as clearly as any verbal act. A cat previously so tame, so gentle, so well-behaved chose to express itself by deliberately infringing the

rule that it had always dutifully observed of using the litter box. The animal got its message across, a strong message of blame that reprimanded its masters for having failed to provide proper care during their absence. Isn't that a rhetorical statement, through retaliation, and at the same time a warning, similar, *mutatis mutandis*, to vengeful acts by humans who claim to have been maltreated?

■ ■ ■

Along the lines sketched above, my query bears on the relation of "feedbacking" and "feed-forwarding" between rhetoric and culture. First, as far as a minimal audience goes, one learns to speak to oneself or even to inert objects through one's culturally provided language—lexicon and semantic grammar alike. And that kind of rhetorical minimal hearer seems to be an anthropological universal; all over the world people talk to themselves and to their tools or to the sea or to the rain, etc. This query bears, therefore, on the tack Rhetoric Culture theory takes to deal with minimal audiences.

My second query has to do with minimal speech acts. Here again we have a cultural universal. Exclamations—one-word orders or admonitions or briefings, etc.—work as condensed developments. A single word may pack—and have as much or even more power than—a whole speech. What steps does Rhetoric Culture theory take to look into such minimal utterances, whether they target humans, oneself, or inert things?

Finally, my third and last query concerns the relation between culture and rhetoric. Strecker and Tyler state "Rhetoric Culture theory explores how rhetoric is founded in culture, and how culture is founded in rhetoric." And they add, "If culture is ubiquitous so is rhetoric. … What we implicate by the concept of rhetoric culture is just this mutuality of rhetoric and culture."

■ ■ ■

But are we still facing the same sort of mutuality when the interlocutors are no longer humans, viz., when birds, dogs, or cats influence each other's behavior through their own kind of rhetoric? And what of animals—viz., a cat—using nonverbal rhetoric to chastise my son and his girlfriend? Does animal rhetoric imply that nonhuman animals also have culture? If so, should Rhetoric Culture theory substantiate the "mutuality of rhetoric and culture" for them as well as for human animals? Or is it that *animal rhetoric* is a misnomer?

I began this inquisitive note with a quote that I repeat here: "There is … a cline of kinds and modes of rhetoric that traverse realities ranging from concrete speech events through text analysis to virtual worlds" (Strecker and Tyler). I conclude by asking whether the "cline" of "kinds" and "modes" include minimal audiences as well as minimal speech acts? And should one add "nonhuman living organisms" before or after "virtual worlds"?

CHAPTER 13

Beyond the Unsaid

Transcending Language through Language[1]

Paul Friedrich

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Life in certain kinds of intense moments leads us to intuitions of realms that stretch or soar beyond speech and everyday realia, but these intuitions resist definition; they cannot be captured. While acknowledging that our reason and our language must always be defeated in such attempts to attain the unobtainable, we still have the deepest desire to edge near to and at least partially glimpse them. We respond to these needs with language and the use of language that, like other aesthetic resources, can give us intimations and rough outlines of the unmanifest beyond the manifest and, even further, the ultimate unmanifest beyond the more immediate unmanifest. These are uses of language that, defeated at description and definition, emerge victorious at suggestion and intimation.

These tactics and tropes, Henry David Thoreau's "parables and expressions," are explored below in terms of two categories: four that defy analogy, and three that defy closure. While such explicitness might strike some as tropological reductionism, or *horribile dictu,* formalism, I hope to have circumvented or transcended this pitfall by meshing analytical definitions with synthesizing illustrations. The trope and tactics, in any case, are peculiarly powerful in the case of great writing and, within that set, wisdom or poetic-religious books with a critical wisdom level, be it the *Tao Te Ching* or the *Bhagavad Gita,* parts of *Genesis* or *The Iliad,* or parts of Tolstoy or Thoreau; here the quality of artistic execution, which cannot be reduced formally, achieves the ontological

transcendence at issue.[2] In laying out the seven uses of language below, I will illustrate each with examples from the writing of Henry David Thoreau.

■ ■ ■

Let's start with a deadly, deadpan definition of analogy. By *analogy* I mean a likeness between things, or a likening of things to each other, in whole or in part, in terms of resemblance, function, or other criteria. I am keenly aware that there are important differences among, for example, mathematical, logical, and, in the present, literary analogy. This analogy and analogizing, in any case, like action itself, cannot be avoided in any given situation, but there are powerful strategies for creating the illusion of such an avoidance, of which I am singling out four.

Mysterious Images. One way analogy can be challenged and the unmanifest suggested is through images that, although they seem simple and leap into the imagination, also resist any and all attempts to pin down definite meanings. The images may be of an outlined object such as a loon, or as vague as an auroral mist, but in any case the manifest appearance is delved into and limned and a vision of what lies beyond is implied, just as in haiku aesthetics the reader/hearer is left to finish the poem. I hasten to ground these abstractions with three of many examples offered by Thoreau's *Walden.*

Among the many mysterious images in this book is the ice field filled with bubbles. "But the ice itself is the object of most interest. … If you examine it closely the morning after it freezes, you find that the great part of the bubbles, which at first appeared to be within it, are against its undersurface, and that more are continuously rising from the bottom." Then follows the trope of exact measurement ("an eighteenth of an inch" for example), then changes of geometrical shape during thaws and freezings, and then the conclusion: "I inferred that the infinite number of bubbles which I had first seen against the undersurface of the ice were now frozen in likewise, and that each in its degree, had operated like a burning glass on the ice beneath to melt and rot it. These are the little airguns which contribute to make the ice crack and whoop."

What does this page in the chapter on "House-Warming" actually mean? Is it the poetry and inevitability of the seasons, which orchestrate *Walden* as a whole? Or a scientific process model of nature to which Thoreau made significant contributions? Or is it the endless Indic round of life, a *samsara* of Emerson's Nature? Or, finally, is it a condensation symbol of the metamorphoses that hold us all in thrall, as suggested by Thoreau-favorite Ovid, and which, by logic and by language, lies beyond the bubbles in the ice or the bubble that is the life of each of us? Thoreau leaves us wondering.

Two other prime examples of the mysterious image in *Walden* involve birds, and one of these is a partridge. After a page on their shy and furtive

ways we read of the mother and her chicks: "… the remarkably adult yet innocent expression of their open and serene eyes is very memorable. All intelligence seems reflected in them. They suggest not merely the purity of infancy, but a wisdom clarified by experience. Such an eye was not born when the bird was but is coeval with the sky it reflects. The woods do not yield another such gem. The traveler does not often look into such a limpid well." In fact, the woods actually will yield as many such gems as there are partridges in them, nor are these eyes wells that reflect "all intelligence," nor could they be "coeval with the sky they reflect" in any sense whatsoever, yet Thoreau's heaping up of counterfactual images gives us an inkling, if we are so inclined, of the realities beyond.

Disintegrating Images. A second kind of defiance is to deconstruct and complicate conventional analogies through mixing or deconstructing their terms: "ripeness is all," "Mercy falleth like a gentle dew from heaven," and "the inner chamber of the heart," and, for that matter, "the circumcision of the heart" and other, relatively simple metaphors aspire to an illusion of completion. Yet they can be broken up and their constituents made superficially incongruous and even contradictory—hence suggesting an infinitude of terms and infinitude itself. Again I ground these perhaps stultifying abstractions with a prime example from *Walden.*

A page in the great "Bean-Field" chapter starts with, "The night-hawk circled overhead in the sunny afternoons … like a mote in the eye, in the heaven's eye," and night-hawks are "small imps that lay their eggs on the ground," then, when hatched, rise, "graceful and slender like ripples caught up from the pond, as leaves are raised by the wind to float in the heavens" and, after these analogies: "such kinship is in Nature." Going on, the generic "hawk is aerial brother of the wave which he sails over and surveys, those his perfect air-inflated wings answering to the unfledged pinions of the sea," and then, from wing/pinion (Latin *penna,* "wing," "feather"), we are carried further to a third kind of hawk, "a pair of hen-hawks circling high in the sky, alternately soaring and descending, approaching and leaving one another, as if they were the embodiment of my thoughts." Three kinds of hawks, in short, analogize each other but also imply unknown raptors of the entire manifest set, and resemble equally manifest cloud formations to which they are compared. Yielding to Thoreau's seductive prose, just how is a hawk in the sky like a mote in your eye and, for that matter, the eye of heaven, assuming that it is the sun, or is it? To these three things and to cloud formations there is no closure, and all of them carry us to marginal and open-ended intuitions of an unmanifest beyond.

Dialectical Contrast. There is another, less direct way that the unmanifest can be suggested. On the one hand are the climactic metaphors that seem to round out a series: after a dozen lacustrine flowers, the purity of the lotus.

On the other hand, two or more complex images or metaphors may not be adjacent but are close enough to each other so that their voices mingle. A high point near the end of *Walden* is a fable, of the author's making, of the artist from Kouroo "who was disposed to strive after perfection." As oblivious of time as Time was of him, he worked on his staff until "before the astonished eyes of the artist" the staff "expanded into a new system. … The material was pure and his art was pure: how could the result be other than wonderful?" On this one great page Thoreau condensed the idea that begins with a striving in us but ends with a product that is perfect, not in its imperfections but in its perfections (note the word "astonished")—an intensification of ideas that run from the Greeks to Keats and to this day. Yet only three pages later we hear of 17-year-locusts and human insects, prophetic allusions that prepare us for the image that climaxes the entire eighteen chapters of *Walden:* the beautiful bug that, sixty years after its egg had been deposited in an apple tree, then warmed by food, gnawed its way out of a table of old apple-wood to its epiphany before "the astonished family of man as they sat around the festive board." Incidentally, the word "astonished" links the two passages. The beautiful bug obviously symbolizes the book *Walden* and Thoreau himself, and also, once again, process models in science that made the author so receptive to Darwin. Yet what unmanifest truth lies between and beyond these two climactic metaphors, the one of process and survival, the other of perfection and stasis? What transcendent truth value compromises and transcends their apparent contradiction?

The Uncapturable Signified. Most powerful of all, or at least most written about and (here) most relevant as an instance of resisting analogy runs: "Long ago I lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. … I have met one or two [travelers] who had heard the hound, the tramp of the horse, and even seen the turtle-dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves." The many searches for a meaning range widely: the triad stands for the "unattainable things of life," or is it "a figurative substitute for nothing that could ever be literal," or does it represent "theoretical strategies or the semiotic play of figures." As against all these readings is the argument that the triad is meant by Thoreau to articulate or suggest the infinitude of loss itself, the sense of loss that attends any actual loss, the necessarily vacuous reality of what can never be regained or recaptured or ever, ever *be* again—the heartbreaking unmanifest that recedes behind the clouds of memory. This is what Thoreau himself implies with Yankee laconicity: when "Uncle Ed" asked him what he had had in mind with this passage, he answered, "Well, Sir, I suppose we all have our losses." Such loss or sense of loss, more than a species of bird or tree (with its Latin, Linnaean name in parentheses), is one thing he meant by fact, facts that could not be represented directly by words or by two-term metaphors such as

"mercy-dew," but that could only be suggested or implied. He meant the fact of intuition and imagination rather than facts of empirical experience.

■ ■ ■

Now we move to the second category, that of resisting closure. There is a large set of additional ways that the use of language can imply the unmanifest beyond the manifest and that—like resisting analogy—work by resisting closure, by leaving things open to verge on randomness, freedom, and the role of chance. These patterns, like some of those discussed above, leave empty spaces between definite meanings, a semiotic vacuum into which the mind can flow—or stretch out toward nothingness. Again, I am singling out three ways of resisting closure.

The Infinite Sentence. Closure can be resisted and hence the infinite unmanifest suggested through the illusion of the sentence without end. It has been demonstrated or at least argued that the sentence itself is an "infinite set" in the sense that by the repeated application of recursive rules it could go to any length—even to the moon, if need there were. This purely formal potential can be contrasted with actual sentences that suggest a liberating extension. One such sentence is the meander, a sentence so long and serpentine that the reader literally forgets where it began and feels it could wander on forever. The line of the meander drifts along without definite goal or direction—unlike the shoreline so conspicuous in fractal geometry that finishes when the island has been circumnavigated.

The meander is exemplified many times in *Walden.* In paragraph 4 of chapter 15, "Winter Animals," a meander is signaled by the short first paragraph, "All day long … came and went," which is then followed by a 197-word sentence that tracks a squirrel to a corn pile, then a 156-word sentence while he sorts out the corn, and, finally, a 136-word sentence as we follow his retreat with the corn. Here the meander effect, the almost Brownian motion that squirrels often seem to exhibit, is, however, qualified by the presence of an eventual goal.

A more extreme example occurs earlier in the "Economy" chapter with sentences that run to between two and three hundred words and that, as they drift along, become increasingly indeterminate—or is it decreasingly determinate? Often the entire sentence is a list, conspicuously so of flora and fauna; a sentence in the chapter misleadingly called "Sounds" lists some twenty-four goods and their origins, suggesting all goods, an infinity of goods. Over half of *Walden*'s chapters are built in terms of lists, notably "Brute Neighbors," "Housewarming," "Former Inhabitants," and "Winter Visitors"; or, rather, *Walden* as a whole is a list of lists, the open-ended list being one of its most salient features, as it is of *Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman, "the poet of inventories." Many

chapters and the book itself thus imply not only that sentences or other units in a sequence can go on and on, but an underlying, unmanifest, transcendental reality, the Pascalian infinitudes of time and (outer) space, neither of which can be comprehended and either of which is as terrifying as death itself. The genius of Thoreau combines abstract ideas of infinite extension with vivid and concrete images of sandbanks and the like, thus making the vertical, "paradigmatic" infinitude of words and their substitutes intersect with the "syntagmatic" infinitude of the open-ended, meandering sentence.

Juxtaposing Opposites. A second way to suggest the unmanifest—which is not specific to *Walden* and indeed common elsewhere—is through juxtaposing or at least counterposing what, at some level of language and thought, are opposites. As the great Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset put it, "How can something truthful not contain a contradiction?" In the present argument, the juxtaposition of opposites may actually be compassed within one word, but, much more commonly, is invoked by two words or two phrases, or two clauses within a sentence—the classic oxymoron. Beyond that, two opposites may collaborate with each other across stretches of text. All these types of strategy, or trope, create a semantic space between the opposed terms that cannot be filled by the imagination of the hearer/reader. The space contains and suggests an infinite unmanifest.

Once again, excellent examples at all levels occur throughout *Walden.* In "The Bean-Field," after much on the practicalities of raising beans, Thoreau suddenly switches from bean seeds to the seeds of "sincerity, truth, simplicity, faith, innocence," and "The seeds which I planted, if indeed they *were* the seeds of those virtues, were wormeaten and had lost their vitality, and so did not come up," and, "Why concern ourselves so much about our beans for seed, and not be concerned at all about the generation of men?" Between and beyond the botanical *Faba* under Thoreau's hoe and his abstract Stoic-Puritanical virtues there is, obviously, infinite space. A few pages later he is poised between thousands of perch and shiners on a moonlit lake, and a horned pout, as contrasted with his dreams of cosmogonal themes: casting upward and downward, he "caught two fishes as it were on one hook."

A more complex juxtaposition of opposites is woven in the person of his visitor, a Canadian woodchopper. To quote only some high points, on the one hand, Alex "was cast in the coarsest mold … the animal man was developed … the intellectual or what is called spiritual in man were slumbering as in an infant," while, on the other hand, he was "simple and natural … without vice and disease … a body gracefully carried … of good humor and contentment … he could defend many institutions better than any philosopher" and "there was a certain positive originality in him." "I did not know whether he was as wise as Shakespeare in disguise" or whether he was a "fool."

Thoreau himself connects this thematic oxymoron with the entire symbolism of Walden Pond when he speaks of "men who are as bottomless as Walden Pond is thought to be." What starts as an ambivalent and even contradictory portrait of one man suggests a deep unmanifest about human nature in general, which, linked to the unmanifest suggested in the natural world, points to the farther realism we are exploring in this essay. Of course, many writers teem with oxymorons, contradictions, and juxtapositions of opposites, but their antinomies are not always part of a larger philosophy of transcendental values, values that Thoreau, unlike Kant, invigorated through grounding in empirical facts and the sensual experience of facts, not to mention political activism.

Ambiguous Rhetoric. A third use of language that opens up reality and points to a beyond is a deliberately ambiguous rhetoric that allows of or even encourages many interpretations. It can do this through balancing the multiple meanings of words or sentences in counterpoint with each other, already dealt with above. It is a hallmark of some political rhetoric, notably "constitutional rhetoric," or of religious poetry where human eros and divine love analogize each other. In the present case, it suggests realms of being beyond experience and is brilliantly exemplified in *Walden*'s two pages on the loon, who, "sailing out from the shore … set up his wild laugh"; and then the two of them start their wild game, the loon always surfacing "with the widest expanse of water" between himself and Thoreau. "Suddenly your adversary's checker disappears beneath the board, and the problem is to place yours nearest to where his will appear again." "He appeared to know his course as surely under water as on the surface." "He kept betraying himself with his laugh … a silly loon" with a demonic, unearthly howl, "perhaps the wildest sound that is ever heard here," until, after a last, prolonged howl, "as if calling on the god of loons to aid him … there came an east wind, filling the whole air with misty rain, and I was impressed as if it were the prayer of the loon answered and his god was angry with me."

One can reduce this passage by invoking pagan totemism, by comparing it with the epic chase after Moby Dick, by positing a civilization of nature represented by the loon, or even by showing how an American Romanticism is given an edge by accurate ornithology. I would argue that the passage, including its ludic side, point us toward realities beyond the manifest, realities that we are made to sense more strongly by a language that denies closure and analogy.

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The philosophy argued above does contrast maximally with a large number of other positions about language that, though some of them sprang up thousands of years ago, are essentially negative. By one of these the relations of

a word to its meanings, whether natural or purely fictitious, are always problematic: the seeker for truth and reality finds that the meanings inherent in a language are more of a semantic minefield than a means to his end. By a second, closely related definition, the relation of words and similar signifiers to their meaning is so tenuous and treacherous that the language of poets and, in fact, any speaker always results in deceiving the listener, be it through chance or the desire to persuade. By a third negative position the bond between words and sentences and what they signify is so irregular and so subject to adjustment that any conversion of language into speech necessarily implies radical reduction and simplification. In the fourth place, the wayward and inconsistent network of meanings in any language is said to actually reflect and reinforce underlying structures of social and political powers that, for their nefarious ends, use language exploitatively to infect, override and entangle the intentions of the speaker. By a fifth negative position, the relation between signifiers and signified is arbitrary, a product of irrational traditions; objective and consistent reference is impossible. Sixth, language and its use entails so many alternative meanings, arbitrary sets, and linguistic games as to entirely problematize truth itself. All six of these well-known positions are, as already emphasized, essentially negative about language, whether couched in terms of natural language forms or their potential, or in terms of the limits of language being the limits of life, or in terms of language as constraining life pervasively. All six of these positions imply that language not only cannot "capture" (e.g., articulate, define) transcendental realms or truths in any sense, but that it cannot even point at them effectively. All six of these relatively negative positions add up to a mainly negative one that denies much critical meaning to language—to say nothing of its role in affording us intimations of transcendental truths.

There is a seventh position that argues for the unlimited potential of language—its energy, figuratively—to express emotions or to define and elaborate cognitively. Within this context, a sentence can be elaborated infinitely and the figures that a language allows facilitate a transition from vague or inchoate sources into meaningful communication. Yet the seventh position, though first cousin to the present one, is not, to my knowledge, concerned with the way language can be used to suggest transcendental values—the unmanifest beyond the manifest. They stay within language and experience.

Counterposed to the negative positions, whether relative or absolute, is the absolutely positive one with its many religious sources and exemplifications. The Word is God. There is a divine plenitude not just in language nor even a text, but in a sound or letter—be it the *Om* of the *Gita* or a single Hebrew character. The two stances of absolute plenitude and of absolute variety do not reduce to the same thing like the motionlessness of a spinning top, but they do differ categorically from that of Thoreau (or Dickinson) when the fi-

nite resources of language and its infinite potentials for expression can serve to make the surreal and the supernatural seem natural and real—really real.

In the above essay, I have argued against all six of the negative positions in terms of seven tropes or strategies:

Defying analogy through 1) mysterious images, 2) disintegrating images, 3) dialectal contrast, and 4) the unrecapturable signified; and *resisting closure* through 1) "the infinite, meandering sentence," 2) juxtaposing opposites, and 3) ambiguous rhetoric. The seven are variously intersected by several kinds of figures, incidentally. By all of these tropes or strategies—and they are a good deal more than that—language and its uses can be seen positively, not as something that channels, limits, distorts, and even undermines reality, but as something that, quite to the contrary, breaks into, unbinds, orients, and reinforces a larger vision of an unmanifest beyond. As Thoreau put it, "I fear chiefly lest my expression may not be *extravagant* enough, may not wander far enough beyond the narrow limits of my daily experience, so as to be adequate to the truth of which I have been convinced." My argument has been that Thoreau, like few others—the *Gita* poet, Wang Wei, the Russian Mandelshtam, and Thoreau's contemporary, Dickinson—did indeed succeed in wandering far beyond the narrow limits of daily experience and was indeed as close as human beings get to being adequate to unmanifest truths beyond of which he was convinced.

Notes

1. For their comments on this essay, I stand indebted to Johannes Fabian, James Fernandez, and Katie Kretler.
2. Many argue that *Walden* is a wisdom book, though not to the degree of *Ecclesiastes* or Hesiod's *Works and Days;* wisdom, while not dominant, has been a critical level at all times in the other works named above.

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CHAPTER 14

Future Imperfect

Imagining Rhetorical Culture Theory

Robert Hariman

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The Rhetoric Culture project is excessive. So many books, authors, even films of the conferences, as if conferences weren't old news. Such ambitions: the model program for a third phase of inquiry in the human sciences, uniting premodern, modern, and postmodern cultures, providing universal schemata and a new master trope. Can the unification of all knowledge be far behind?

Excess is scandalous. It embarrasses and becomes a stumbling block to social acceptance. Too much excitement, lavish expenditures, extreme sports, comprehensive decoration, and the like all seem to be in bad taste or dangerous. Nouveau riche, eating contests, body tattoos, and other deviations always draw attention, but often with the strange feeling that one has when staring at the scene of a car crash.

Surely there are good reasons, even evolutionary wisdom, behind the social discipline that censures excessive expenditure and excessive consumption. Squandering resources isn't the smart move for the long haul. Yet there clearly are strong motives for visibly excessive social display, which has survived and may even paradoxically enhance species survival. In modern societies, which experience both unprecedented levels of affluence and distinctive probabilities for catastrophe, excess may acquire additional significance. Let me suggest two corollary claims: First, excess is scandalous because it reveals in hyperbolic form the social order and thereby destabilizes social authority. This order can include the seemingly measured habits of scholarship. Second, the aversion to

excess has influenced the human sciences to an extent that they misrecognize their subject. That is, in order to understand culture, art, religion, democratic politics, and other signifying practices, one has to understand how they depend on excessive social practices and at times on the display of excess.

The deepest scandal is that human beings are excessive, or, worse, a surplus that is realized through waste motion. I'll leave that thought hanging while turning to a more familiar incarnation of social display. The most immediate and benign sense of the excessive is the ornamental, and look at how people ornament their world. Rich or poor societies, it makes no difference. The intricate designs, careful handwork, the marking of almost every made thing, the embroidery, fretwork, appliqués, leatherwork, woodworking, wallpaper, tiles, ruffles, patterns, and images—in modern societies, the images are everywhere. Look at what you so often seem to overlook: the designs on clothes, purses, and skin, and on rugs, sofas, and dishes, and on cars, scooters, and horses, and on weapons. Nor does it stop there, for stance, gesture, and motion are ornamented; more to the point, all manner of action is meaningful because mannered. And it goes farther. The ritual is performed precisely, with this many steps toward the tree and back, and toward it and back, and again, and with additional embellishments provided as appropriate along the way, many times beyond what would seem to be necessary or efficient, but all of it an ornamenting of the space. And the wedding will cost way too much, every part of it both uniquely inflected and thoroughly conventional, and the biggest fear is to err on the side of doing too little. And the still life is produced over and over again to be hung on walls where it will barely be seen, and the New Year's Eve party hats and confetti come out every year only to be discarded within hours, like the valentines and the Easter eggs and the flags, and the speeches and newspapers and films, and the wars.

And, of course, rhetoric. Known by terms of excess—*grandiloquence, bombast, hyperbole, puffery*—rhetoric is to be curbed because of its capacity to distort perception, inflate the emotions, and drive people to irrational action. When not dangerous, rhetoric is seen as merely ornamental, particularly as it is associated with the figures of speech and other elements of style. The rhetorical becomes those embellishments adding mere pleasure to a discourse. Its native condition is vanity and other explicitly social desires, and it leads one to a life of distraction. As Plato explained, rhetoric was a species of flattery, which "hunts after folly and deceives with what is most pleasant." Plato extends the point by analogy: rhetoric is like "cosmetics," which "tricks us with padding and makeup and polish and clothes, so that people carry around beauty not their own to the neglect of the beauty properly theirs through gymnastic." (Plato, "Gorgias": 464d–465b). Instead of truth, deceit; instead of training, ornamentation; instead of nature, artifice; one might add, instead of nature, cul-

ture. Deceit, ornamentation, and artifice are all forms of excess, as are rhetoric and culture.

So it is that rhetoric is scandalous. Worse, the persistence of what should be not needed reveals what has been denied: that human life is one of *nomos,* not *physis,* conventions, not natural laws, of things that could be otherwise, not transcendent truths. Reality, it seems, is not enough for us. We always lack something that can only be supplied by others, by overproduction, and by unending chains of supplementarity. Social creatures competing for attention, respect, and other forms of status, we take pleasure in being deceived, and our happiness depends not only on persuading but also on being persuaded. Even then there is no terminus, no satisfaction not leading to another desire and another artifact. Instead of a natural equilibrium between supply and demand, humans create a world in which inexhaustible demand cannot be met by excessive supply. In short, the scandal of excess is that it reveals a corresponding deficit.

Now anthropology has come to this threshold. The deep relativism it shares with rhetoric can no longer be disguised with appeals to a common humanism coincident with distinctions between the primitive and the modern. At the same time, as modernization spreads relentlessly and reduces other cultures to practices of commercial display, culture itself becomes something between an endangered species and a dispensable category, and in any case an embarrassment within modern econometrics. Thus, there might be good reason to affirm a dual commitment in rhetoric and anthropology to understand human life in terms of oratory, chants, civic rituals, festivals, fashion, the many other, incessant practices of decoration, and other forms of social performance that are characterized by their excessiveness, their strictly nonutilitarian, decidedly uneconomic expenditures, their distributions of surplus social energy into the air. Ultimately, cultural explanation would add an archaeology of waste to what is known about the remarkable economies that also are at the core of every society and civilization.

This last claim may have been excessive. For now, the focus can be on how excess usually is not waste, and how it is a productive force, whether in adding the beautiful pattern to a blouse or in creating the standup comic's caricature of authority. Likewise, the Rhetoric Culture project can be a study of excess because it is a study in excess. Here I refer not to doing too much but rather to a specific style, a manner of overdetermination, that is both distinctive and unremarked or incorrectly identified or not yet adequately realized. For that, let us return to the primal scene. Had one attended the conferences in Mainz in 2005, one might have noticed that the conference meeting room was not the usual, modern, institutional setting. Nor was it wholly different, for functional tables and chairs were there along with the blank walls, florescent lighting, and

audio-visual equipment that provide the standard background of academic work today. But there was more.[1]

On a panel of the left side of the entryway there was a large blue/black poster of Stephen Tyler's ICP (Intention/Convention/Performance) model overlaid on a photograph of the M101 galaxy.[2] The poster is strikingly attractive and rhetorically powerful; it catches the eye and places an idea within a fashionably well-ordered universe, thereby tapping into the several senses of the Greek root of "cosmetic." It also presents culture as nature and aligns rhetoric culture with modern science, its powerful technologies of representation, and the natural order they reveal. It is at once modern and mythic and both representational and schematic. It is a herald of things to come.

Looking along the left wall, one then sees three headless costumes hanging in space. They are dresses from West Africa. They are large, visually impressive, and a bit spooky as they also evoke a strong sense of the missing bodies. They hang in the air as if corpses or ghosts, there but not there, empty yet present. They are costumes only, but acquire a stronger presence than if they were being worn by people in the room. There is a body there, but on the wall as the photograph of a man on a tree. One then might see that the wall has on it texts, some captioning the costumes, photographs, and other works displayed along the room and some providing other information about the African cultures represented in the room. At the end of the left wall there is a larger-than-life photograph of a man grinning happily in a ceremonial headdress. He is magnificent, one of the most vital images I have seen of the orator, that is, of someone who is fully capable of civic performance, who embodies the art of political speech, who rises to its demands and enjoys its rewards while bringing the community into agreement and action. He would be a fitting representative of one part of the Rhetoric Culture project, "the ethnographic account of rhetorical practices in different cultures."[3] Of course, this figure also would be highly gendered, objectified, and otherwise limiting, but it doesn't matter for we are only one quarter of the way around the room.

On the front wall one can see the text of a Magar shaman song and four photos of village life. There also is a head table above which is placed the Rhetoric Culture totem of a χ (the Greek letter *chi*) flanked by two sticks pointing in opposing directions. The wall also has off to the side an AV screen and a cluster of photos in the corner. On the right wall there is a large photograph of huts and people, then four figures, two offset photos and text on a vertical screen, then four paintings on the wall and another on a divider, and text printed in script font on faux manuscript paper. On the fourth wall, there was another painting, script, text, a drawing of a clock and a man, and more text, and a musical note, a cutout figure, a TV screen, and a large Moebius strip hanging in the air, and a photograph of a woman grinding meal along with another

text, artifacts hanging on the wall and laying in a glass box, the digital camera and other equipment used to record the conference, and a poster on a cabinet door.

And so we have come around to the beginning, except that now there no longer is a beginning. Linear temporality has been replaced by a panoramic, circular organization within which past and present and traditional and modern are jumbled together. There are suggestions of universal laws, and the modern gaze has been reproduced in one significant particular—the anthropologist is not shown—but the result is a thoroughgoing particularity arranged more by visible conventions of display rather than any hierarchy of representation. The dominant effect is one of mixing: of mixed media and especially of images and texts, but also of technologies of representation, high and low cultural objects, traditional and modern artifacts, and other juxtapositions. The organization was paratactic, and any two objects in the array could have been moved away from or next to one another without making the array less intelligible. Hierarchies were present, starting with the first poster and the display of Their clothes but not Ours, yet also destabilized by the lack of contextual reinforcement. Is the Moebius strip a higher-order achievement or merely another curiosity? Is the orator greater than the village women or were they supplying essential resources for communal life that he could never provide? Even the questions are too monotonic, as they presume a reduction of the multiple coding that permeates the room. Script has been added to a painting, a text has been artificially aged, just as digital technologies will record people coming and going, adding this discourse or that, each overlay having no necessary relationship with the others. Even the signature works are confounded, for there are two of them (the poster and the χ totem), each coming from one of the founders but now floating in the semiotic space of the room without direct relationship to the other artifacts.

The display is excessive, and surely of no utility to the conference, where the participants, moderns every one, studiously ignored it or made do with a nervous joke or two. It also confirms precisely what Plato feared. Once you take up with rhetoric, soon "the saying of Anaxagoras would be only too true. … 'All things alike,' mixed up together in the same place" (Plato, "Gorgias": 465d). This fear of disorder may itself seem trivial as long as the decorative is kept in its place, which is what the conference participants already were trained to do. But this is where the decisive shift can take place: the shift from seeing rhetoric as the source of pollution to seeing how it is a means for managing the inevitable mixing that characterizes modern life. Likewise, instead of seeing the display as merely excessive, one can identify its master trope, which is allegory. The cue comes from some of the paintings on the right-hand wall that have patently allegorical content. The demonstration has already oc-

curred, as each of the characteristics that I described are features of allegorical representation, right down to the "cosmic image" we encountered when entering the room (Fletcher 1964: 70–146).[4]

An allegory is a figural enactment of multiple interpretations of collective experience. The trope marks a large set of rhetorical techniques from parataxis to nonlinear temporality, a complex hermeneutic featuring but not limited to linked orders of interpretation, and a history of representation that reveals its utility during periods of both semiotic excess and deep cultural change. These are the conditions of life in a global society, and allegorical coding and consciousness are proliferating throughout the full range of media and arts in many societies today. I won't rehearse the arguments I have made elsewhere for taking up allegory as a mode of inquiry, but let me note today that the trope should be of interest to anthropologists (Hariman 2002: 267–296; 1999: 9–23). As James Clifford has noted, "Ethnographic writing is allegorical both at the level of its content (what it says about cultures and their histories) and of its form (what is implied by its mode of textualization)" (Clifford 1986: 98). Clifford emphasizes self-reflexive narrative in contrast to more scientific discourses, while his reflexivity questions the pathos of recovering authentic cultures on the verge of being lost to history. As he would recognize, however, allegorical thinking should not be limited to one trope or one message, tendencies that are evident even in tropology. Because of its own mixed nature, allegory provides the means to move beyond single-minded attention to metaphor or irony. Like those tropes, allegory recognizes a surplus of signs and shifts in perspective, and it also allows a wider range of invention and interpretation.

Allegory is at once a figure of excess and of deficiency. The excess is marked by the explicit overcoding of the presentation: image and text, past and present, dominion and dissent, these and other modalities are present. More to the point, they are present as signs, for the intermixing of the disparate forms makes their semiotic character explicit. This multiplicity of signs is formally reinforced by the explicit artificiality of the work, which in turn points not to a prior reality but rather to the gap between sign and object. Allegories register a condition of semiotic excess that cannot be encompassed by a master narrative; the result of overproduction is fragmentation. Thus, allegories also mark the fact that reality always exceeds the means of representation, and that interpretation is necessary to complete any representation. The relatively static modality of the allegorical composition evokes an active interpreter who must not only read multiple codes but make choices regarding their relative value and application elsewhere.

I offer allegory as representative figure for the Rhetoric Culture project. It provides not so much a method as a way of understanding pertinent

methodological issues. It offers not so much a strategy of legitimation as a perspective for understanding how rhetoric and culture alike are created and maintained by practices that are at their core excessive expenditures of social energy through excessive articulation of signs, shapes, images, and gestures. The fact that successful cultural practices come to produce larger economies for distributing status and many other resources is beside the point. If the initial drive were only toward economy, nature would prevail and neither rhetoric nor culture would exist.

That they do exist is a testament to the relationship between excess and deficiency in human nature. Or, that at least is the explanation provided by the tradition of rhetoric. To review, the question is, why this continual embellishment of our speech and decoration of the world around us? The answer transmitted through the history of rhetoric begins with Protagoras and Gorgias, is developed through the Isocratean/Ciceronian tradition, and is reiterated at crucial points as a foundational principle by Vico, Nietzsche, and others, and, more recently, by Hans Blumenberg. Protagoras begins the genealogy with his claim that all things are known and valued through individual experience (*panton krematon metron estin anthropos*). Gorgias makes the connection with representation explicit by claiming that all persuasion is necessarily false since it consists of representations of past and future by individuals who cannot possibly have complete knowledge of either (Gorgias "Encomium," 286).[5] Humans make such things as opinions because they cannot have a direct veridical relationship with reality; Gorgias concludes that to properly judge a human being—in the particular case, Helen—one must appreciate how she necessarily is turned alike by speech and love, both of which are matters of perception. One can jump from there to Vico, who makes it an axiom of his system that "Because of the indefinite nature of the human mind, wherever it is lost in ignorance man makes himself the measure of all things" (Vico 1970: 18 [120]). The allusion to Protagoras keys the rest of the work, not least the claim that the imaginative, poetic world-making capacity of human beings is a direct response to our lack of direct knowledge. "As rational metaphysics teaches that man becomes all things by understanding them (*homo intelligendo fit omnia*), this imaginative metaphysics shows that man becomes all things by not understanding them (*homo non intelligendo fit omnia*); and perhaps the latter proposition is truer than the former, for when man understands he extends his mind and takes in the things, but when he does not understand he makes the things out of himself and becomes them by transforming himself into them" (Vico 1970: 88 [405]). Our productive capacity for symbolizing and thereby making the human world comes out of an incapacity.

Nietzsche's return to the sophists leads to the same result, which is summarized most notably in his statement on truth:

> What is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, anthropomorphisms, in short, a sum of human relations that were poetically and rhetorically heightened, transferred, and adorned, and after long use seem solid, canonical, and binding to a nation. Truths are illusions about which it has been forgotten that they are illusions, worn-out metaphors without sensory impact, coins which have lost their image and now can be used only as metal, and no longer as coins (Nietzsche 1989: 250).

Of the many inversions being arrayed, Nietzsche's definition of the truth as enervated figuration, lacking the vitality of rhetorical assertion, is perhaps the boldest stroke. Now the surplus energy that is life flows through rhetoric, while truth has become something weak, lacking not only meaning but also force. But we are getting ahead of the story, for Nietzsche already had defined the source of rhetoric as the individual's need to compensate for natural weakness by developing "powers in dissimulation; for this is the means by which the weaker, less robust individuals survive, since in the struggle for existence they are denied the horns and the sharp teeth of beasts of prey. This art of dissimulation reaches its peak in man; here deception, flattery, lying and cheating, slander, false pretenses, living on borrowed glory, masquerading, conventions of concealment, playacting before others and before oneself, fluttering about the flame of vanity" (Nietzsche 1989: 247). Humans live in the excesses of language because they lack the strength to survive in nature.

Blumenberg provided the most extensive statement of this argument in the twentieth century, arguing that both philosophical anthropology and the philosophy of language turn on the question of whether the human being is rich or poor in cognitive capacity (Blumenberg 1987: 429-457). If capable of knowing all that is needed to thrive in the world, then language is defined by the tasks of representation, and any excess—any artistic ornamentation or rhetorical embellishment—is but the issue of the surplus energy, creativity, and leisure that comes from mastery of the world. Rhetoric is merely a cosmetic art and obviously subordinate to the more serious work of contending with scarcity as it exists in the state of nature. All this changes by accepting that the human being is overmatched by reality. Without denying the incredible achievements of modern science and engineering, it seems evident—to be consistent, one cannot claim from this position that it is certain—that the human brain is not capable of knowing the natural world, the human world, and itself in toto. We are fallible, in part because we did not need to be otherwise to survive. Moreover, our survival strategy has been not to adapt physically to an environmental niche, but rather to mediate our relation with the environment through culture while spreading across the entire planet. Humans survive by being social animals organized through language and other symbolic prac-

tices. I'll assume that I don't have to embroider this point further, but the fact is that it can't be known without embroidery. For what is equally notable about the human being is not only its cognitive incapacity but also its incredible production of signs, images, languages, and arts.

It is this conjunction of cognitive deficiency and linguistic surplus that is the key to understanding the origin and significance of both rhetoric and culture. First, "the human relation to reality is indirect, circumstantial, delayed, selective, and above all 'metaphorical'" (Blumenberg 1987: 439). Although this point lies at the core of the linguistic turn of the twentieth century, it has been particularly influential within rhetorical study—for example, via Kenneth Burke's theory of symbolic action, whereby any selection of reality is inevitably also a deflection of reality (Burke 1945). One encounters the world though language that is at once more and less than its subject; attention and indirection, and excess and deficit are inevitably linked characteristics of mediation, knowledge, and action. Furthermore, the human being cannot know what is the right thing to do, yet must act. As Aristotle noted, deliberation is about what can be otherwise—and, as Blumenberg adds, about what can be done in more than one way. The result of this predicament is that the human, to act, to survive, must predicate attributes and make connections across the unknown. These connections are simultaneously of two kinds: epistemic and social. One posits what is the case and one organizes oneself with others to be able to act with any efficacy, that is, collectively or with regard to the resources and constraints that have become institutionalized through prior collective action. Moreover, this process must serve two, very different ends: on the one hand, it must be capable of ongoing revision such that (partial) knowledge of the world can be acquired and put to use; on the other hand, it must be sustained without significant regard to what one knows or whether one is wrong. Without revision, we die or at least stagnate, settling into a particularly ecological niche that might or might not be sustainable. Without social organization that is there in lieu of knowledge, we wouldn't survive unless always guessing correctly, which would not happen. Needless to say, these two ends can be at odds, producing conflict and so additional need for rhetorical skill and social organization capable of brokering both change and continuity.

This relationship between cognitive deficiency and discursive excess can be found among anthropologists as they turn to rhetoric to better explicate cultural practices. James Fernandez begins *Persuasions and Performances* with the observation that "It [our persuasive, performative nature] may be the consequence of being a very generalized animal with very little in specific adaptations to specific milieus wired into our brains. As a consequence we are required to invent ways of being" (Fernandez 1986: vii). Stephen Tyler and Ivo Strecker position their project through multiple articulations along the same

line. Culture is placed within rhetoric precisely to register both a collapse of meaning and to define culture as an "'echo chamber'" of multiple meanings multiply iterated.[6] The collapse is defined as

> a crisis in representation brought on by the failure of the foundational metaphor of language-as-the-mirror-of-the-real (Rorty 1979). The concept of representation, of the substitution of signs for originary objects, enabled a consensual community sustained by an order of discourse founded in reason, truth, logic, and plain style, and was based in the separation of fact and value and in the idea of language as a transparent medium having a shared code and an analytically determinate essence.[7]

Now, however, that "the hegemony of representation over communication has been broken," one can see the

> wide margin of indeterminacy and interpretative leeway in communication, for people do not and cannot always know how to say properly what they think. By the same token they do not and cannot always fully know what others mean by what they say. These seeming shortcomings in natural communication can in turn be—and in fact often are—exploited rhetorically. The use of metaphor is a prime example of this, because when people create metaphors they create semantic collocations that resist any univocal interpretation and therefore have an element of the "fantastic." In other words, the "metaphors we live by," to use Lakoff and Johnson's persuasive title, imply that we also live by the fantastic.

In other words, to communicate is to move in the realm of the imaginary, the virtual, the inherently excessive.[8]

This anthropological condition is replicated in the history of the human sciences: rhetoric culture is positioned as a third stage following the production of systems and their deconstruction and dispersion. The many gaps in representation that now appear are not to be filled in with a larger system, but rather are cues for an alternative approach of magnifying the many forms of excess.

> Rhetoric Culture theory explores the possibilities afforded by rhetoric to explain culture. It does this by paying more attention to the unsaid behind the said, the latent beneath the manifest, and the unreasonable as well as the reasonable sides of human existence. It emphasizes multivocality as much as univocality, understanding as much as translation, imagination as much as decodation, and it adds, or rather brings back, the ideas of emergence, creativity, construction, and negotiation to the ideas of episteme, knowledge, representation, rules, and symbol/sign systems. But it does this without necessary reference to the notion of meaning, for understanding is not exclu-

> sively or even primarily dependent on meaning, or knowing the meaning, or symbol interpretation, but comes about as much through sensibility which includes sense making, feelings, and empathy (Tyler and Strecker, chap. 1).

Again, because "culture can never be grounded in objectivity," one turns to "those phantasms (conventionalities) which we call culture."[9]

What distinguishes these calls for the imagination from Romanticism is the explicit emphasis on rhetoricality, that is, on the semiotic reflexiveness and discursive invention also found in allegory. The authors' emphasis on the chiasmus is illustrative, as it becomes a machine for changing objects into signs and signs into objects. These and higher order transpositions (as between representation and communication and past and future) become means for recombination of cultural materials that now are all understood to be conventions of usage. As opposed to modernity's fetish with the new, the allegorical writer reuses the past to mark the contingency of the present and fashion alternative futures.[10] No wonder that Don Quixote is an "icon of the Rhetoric Culture project."[11] This allegorical entanglement also demonstrates the importance of moving beyond metaphor and irony when explicating cultural practices. Fixation on a single trope is the equivalent of univocality; a danger also for allegory, but one abated if that mode is understood to be constituted by the play of figures.

What is most important about the allegorical framework is that it advances a central task of rhetoric culture as it is a postmodern movement. Specifically, the program has accepted a paradoxical perspective that I have called culture without hierarchy (Hariman 2002: 288ff.). On the one hand, conditions of semiotic excess and cultural pluralism combine to dislodge any claim to a universally valid hierarchy of morals, knowledge, art, politics, or any other human practice. This change, of course, both liberates and disturbs. On the other hand, human beings cannot live without moral order, determinations of the better and worse, and affirmations of some transcendent value. In Burke's terms, the principle of hierarchy is endemic to symbolic action (Burke 1969: 141). This paradox should be familiar to any ethnographer as one struggles to reconcile respect for the host culture while remaining grounded in one's own. Let me submit that one of the goods to be realized by locating culture within rhetoric is a better means for understanding how this tension is mediated in formal and informal discursive practices. Rhetoric culture is defined by this tension. On the one hand, "The concept of rhetoric culture does not accord with oppositions between literate and nonliterate, civilized and savage, fact and fiction, origin and telos, culture and nature, signifier and signified, spirit and material, mind and body, reason and passion, figurative and literal, apparent and real, or past and present that made the structure of modern dialectic and constituted themselves in easy antithesis."[12] Likewise, Rhetoric Culture theory "does not privilege speech over writing and is responsive to all technol-

ogies of discourse. It does not give priority to either the speaker (the oratorical mode) or the hearer (the hermeneutic), or to the code (structuralism)."[13] On the other hand, the project clearly has to create provisional hierarchies, not least by setting the postmodern over the modern. The key is to keep the arrangement provisional, which is harder than it looks. This is the spirit of claiming a "hybrid discourse that is neither objective nor critical in itself," and it is the implication of the display in the conference room. The question remains, however, whether that display is ever changed.

And so we get to the future. The turn to the tradition of rhetoric is always a turn to the past, usually because one is at sea in the present, in order to invent a future. This is necessarily a "future imperfect," in several senses of the term. The grammatical sense is of continuous action; not an end state, certainly not a utopia. The imperfect tense can also refer to coincident actions, and coincidence could become a crucial idea in Rhetoric Culture theory. Hybridity is a form of coincidence, and relationships within and between cultures are shown to be coincident at the moment of rhetorical invention, whether to dissemble a received coherence or join together what had been disparate. More generally, the charting of continuities and coincident moments in rhetorical practice across cultures is necessary to work out the range of social performance and the possibilities for negotiation in multicultural polities. But we know that. The deeper sense of *future imperfect* comes from its sense of fallibility: not perfect, defective, blemished, human. *Future imperfect* fuses excess and deficit, weakness and plenitude. The continuous unfolding of the Rhetoric Culture project and the coincidences it hopes to create will occur because of lack of any better ability to chart one's course, and the one sure result of the project is that it will fall short of its ambitions. But we know that as well. The point is not that time and chance happens to us all, but that accepting this particular sense of the future illuminates several paths that might be overlooked otherwise.

That is, the conduct of inquiry under the sign of rhetoric culture ought to include consideration of two fields of projection. Each perspective projects contemporary ideas forward to create an alternate future. Each of these projections comes from attention to a different form of excess. The "parodic projection" sees culture as a form of play and rhetoric as an art of improvisation. The "castrophile projection" sees culture as an incipient disaster and rhetoric as an art of prophecy. Between these two alternatives lies a chasm. One task of any Rhetoric Culture project would be to combine the inventiveness of the first perspective with the seriousness of the second.

Of course, any statement about what the Rhetoric Culture program ought to do is Quixotic. The conferences have already occurred, the books have been arranged, and no one has any obligation to listen to me. We find another of the definitions given for the imperfect: not legally enforceable. Or we find that

one future might as well have already happened, and so it is left to a discursive action such as this essay to imagine another.

Tyler and Strecker give playfulness multiple endorsements, from the errant knight to "the mythical trickster," who, like rhetoric, "allows us to turn fact into fiction and fiction into fact," to take up "limitless flights of fancy."[14] There is a paradox here, for play has to include rejection of norms of seriousness, and yet simple negligence is not in any way consistent with the intelligence and discipline that tricksters actually possess. Indeed, one of the trickster's tricks is to make the audience overlook his or her professionalism. Quixote remains a representative figure here, but think also of Gorgias. As Scott Consigny has reminded us, Gorgias was a consummate performer who specialized in parodic imitation (Consigny 2001: 166ff.). This was done in part for the applause and other rewards it provided, but also as his central strategy in the high stakes game of competing for the power to define Greek culture. Gorgias's parodic displays, including his embracing the trickster character of the *alazon,* the self-inflated boaster of Greek comedy, produced the deep reflexiveness of rhetoricality. His parodic alterations of major genres of Greek discourse revealed not only his own devices but that all speakers were equally conventional. The *alazon* can be a butt of the joke, and he can reveal that the *eiron,* say, Socrates himself, is just as much a creature of speech and self-delusion. The parodist exposes the foundationalist. By mocking the serious discourse, the foundationalist is shown to be as conventional, partial, and mistaken as the parody; an excess in one display reveals another deficit where none is supposed to exist.

Parody would seem to be a figure of the present, not of the future, and a parodic projection can easily go off into inane and increasingly boring repetition. Or, one can equate parody with deconstruction and let it go at that. I have in mind something else: seeing how cultures both continue and change over time through reflexive iteration of multiple codes. More specifically, the parodic projection reveals how any code ultimately becomes overextended. A parodic future is one in which everyone fails, all systems crash, the world ends, and yet life goes on. One example is that of the video game, which also reveals different generational relationships to the parodic sensibility. Marvels of excess while buffering the player from "real" consequences, these virtual worlds mix together two basic forms of rhetoric and culture: zero-sum competition in a distinctively coherent virtual environment. They also allow exploration of alternative paths toward a goal. Reflexive iteration can be a hermeneutic shared by textual scholar and ethnographer, particularly as they see how the process already has been underway in the discourses they study and the discourses they use themselves. The future imperfect is itself a series of iterations.

Sometimes, however, the world ends and life doesn't go on. Tyler and Strecker also note that "an awareness of the rhetorical, tropical, fantastic na-

ture of culture helps us to understand the mad, horrific, unspeakable, even unthinkable excesses that characterize the course of human history."[15] It may be too much to claim understanding, but it is enough at times to acknowledge the carnage. To understand would have to go beyond counting the cost to seeing how the present is already a future imperfect, that is, how the current processes of human wastage will continue toward disaster. Peter Sloterdijk has remarked: "Modernity is losing, in addition to its feeling of vitality, the distinction between crisis and stability" (Sloterdijk 1987: 125).[16] I'm not sure about a loss of vitality, but there is no doubt that "Today, the latent will to catastrophe on all sides has taken cover under the official respectability of the politics of peace. … Perhaps it is the 'accomplishment of terrorism'—to speak frivolously—to have made the catastrophile currents, at least here and there, tangible and recognizable" (Sloterdijk 1987: 123–24). (This prophetic statement was published in 1983/1987.) Making catastrophile currents tangible and recognizable is a task for the human sciences. This would include identifying the future as it is already latent in the present, in the form of both the objective preconditions of what is to come, and the intuitions, fears, hopes, and all other intimations and orientating moods as they constitute daily life and cultural production. It also would have to include confronting the practices of denial that nurture the catastrophic outcome. The ironist notes that the fear of catastrophe is one of the obstacles to preventing it, particularly as that fear is so easily manipulated rhetorically by those with more immediate and selfish advantages in mind. But irony can't represent enough of what is involved.

One way to see the future in the present is to place what is in the foreground of social life against a horizon of potential catastrophe. That horizon is chosen in part because it is the inevitable result of human deficit and surplus, our paradoxical combination of vulnerability within nature and the power to remake nature, not least of all human nature. Nonetheless, the selection of that horizon is arbitrary, an admittedly artificial construction, a somewhat incommensurable addition to any other model of society and culture—in other words, an allegory.

It is telling that one of the most evocative statements of a catastrophic vision in the human sciences is coded allegorically. The author is Walter Benjamin:

> A Klee painting named "Angelus Novus" shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such

> violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress. (Benjamin 1969: 257–58)

So it is that progress begets catastrophe, while God's herald is made mute by the force of events. Ironically, the storm is blowing out of Paradise, perhaps a metaphor for the utopian motives driving all modernist experiments, socialist and capitalist alike. If the critic is to escape the angel's fate, she will have to aspire to less. Allegory is one such aspiration: it involves living after cynicism, after hierarchy, and after catastrophe without denying any of them their due. Nor is allegory required to face backward, for it involves seeing the future in the present, keeping the past alive, and speaking in ways that are always open to new combinations of allegiance and difference.

When they function well, this is what cultures do. They are large allegorical works and the artistic context for all of life. It also is what good rhetorics do: providing sufficient resources for collective work without shuttering the imagination on other ways of working and living together. But unlike cultures, rhetoric is also a way of seeing that has no place, no people, no way of life. It is everywhere and nowhere, a human capacity that has no home but the storm. As John Peters has suggested, understanding human communication requires accepting that humans "speak into the air," throwing ourselves forward by disseminating signs that find meaning not in the reciprocal understanding of dialogue but rather through circulation and appropriation by others often unknown to us. Peters is quoting Paul, "ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification" (Peters 1999: vii).[17] Multiple codes and many silences. A seemingly inexhaustible flow of words, and yet communication depends on chance and may be aided by incomprehension. Excess and deficit, with neither one ever to eliminate the other. I think it is important that, some of the time, rhetoric is understood on these terms if it is to be of use in our present circumstances. In order to understand culture as it is lived provisionally while talking with others incessantly and at times pathetically, one must be willing to appreciate rhetoric. In respect to the rightly excessive ambitions of the Rhetoric Culture project, there is need to ponder frailty.

■ ■ ■

Thus, I will close by speaking of another angel, the angel of rhetoric. Because she is not strong enough to spread her wings magnificently, she is blown helter-skelter by the storm. She would like to fly evenly, powerfully on its winds, but instead she is thrown round and around, tumbling through the air. Every so often she is able to grasp a perch and hang on—and so she holds

on to institutions, media, communities, disciplines—but then she is torn away again. Her words are torn away also, blown in front of her and scattered like stray sounds, like leaves in the storm. This is what is called a universal art.

Notes

1. When not holding the Rhetoric Culture conferences, the room served as an exhibition space for the Institute of Anthropology and African Studies. The building was once the Auditorium Maximum at the Forum Universitatis of Johannes Gutenberg University when the university was opened in 1946 shortly after World War II. Before that, it was a military barracks. To denominate the university, the words *Ut omnes unum sint* were carved into the top of the foyer to greet students entering the building. From the standpoint of the allegorical display, that humanist sentiment and its pretension to a universal language of learning now becomes merely another element of the past available for recombination within a postmodern culture.
2. The central image can be seen at *http://www.rhetoricculture.org/conf.htm.*
3. Tyler and Strecker, chap. 1.
4. Note that there actually were two such ornaments in the room; the other is the χ symbol on the front wall. The two will reflect the fact that the project had dual authorship, and also signify a continuing polysemy.
5. Note also that Gorgias begins the "Encomium" by identifying each kosmos ("ornament") that is appropriate to major elements of Greek life.
6. Pierre Maranda, "Echo Chambers and Rhetoric: Sketch of a Model of Resonance Theory," in Christian Meyer and Felix Girke, eds., *The Rhetorical Emergence of Culture,* vol. IV of this series.
7. Tyler and Strecker, chap. 1.
8. See Strecker and Tyler, Introduction.
9. Ibid.
10. Tyler and Strecker, chap. 1, quoting Ralph Citron, "Hyperbolic Culture," in Michael Carrithers, eds., *Rhetoric and the Vicissitudes of Life,* vol. III of the series.
11. Tyler and Strecker, chap. 1.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Strecker and Tyler, Introduction.
15. Ibid.
16. Sloterdijk makes use of allegorical techniques throughout the book. The history of allegory suggests that it disposes one toward imagining historical loss; it may also be suited to representing and managing that condition.
17. The quoted text is 1 Coriolanus 14: 9–10.

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